A VIEW OF SOCIETY AND MANNERS IN ITALY:

WITH

ANECDOTES relating to some EMINENT CHARACTERS.

By JOHN MOORE, M.D.

VOL. II.

Strenua nos exercet inertia: navibus atque
Quadrigis petimus bene vivere. Quod petis, hic est.
HOR.

DUBLIN:

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BRITISH MUSEUM
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OCT

CONTENTS

OF THE

SECOND VOLUME.

LETTER XXXIII. p. 1.

PILGRIMAGES to Loretto.—Manufactures.—Confessionals.—Basso Relievos.—Zeal of Pilgrims.—Iron grates before the Chapels.—Reflections.

LETTER XXXIV. p. 9.

Tolentino.—The Apennines.—A hermit.—Umbria.—Spoletto.

LETTER XXXV. p. 16.

Terni.—Narni.—Otricoli.—Civita Castellana.—Campania of Rome.

LETTER XXXVI. p. 22.

Rome.—Conversationis.—Cardinal Bernis.—The distress of an Italian lady.

LETTER XXXVII. p. 28.

Remarks on ancient and modern Rome.—The church of St. Peter's.

LETTER XXXVIII. p. 38.

The ceremony of the Poſſeſſo.

LETTER XXXIX. p. 44.

Pantheon.—Coliſeum.—Gladiators.

LETTER XL. p. 58.

The Campidoglio.—Forum Romanum.—Jews.

LETTER XLI. p. 65.

Ruins.—Via Sacra.—Tarpeian Rock.—Campus Martius.—Various Forums.—Trajan's Column.

LETTER XLII. p. 72.

The beatification of a Saint.

LETTER XLIII. p. 77.

Character of modern Italians.—Obſervations on human nature in general.—An Engliſh Officer.—Cauſe of the frequency of the crime of murder.

LETTER XLIV. p. 87.

Different kinds of punishment.—Account of an execution.—Souls in purgatory.

LETTER XLV. p. 96.

The usual course with an antiquarian.—An expeditious course, by a young Englishman.—The Villa Borghese.

LETTER XLVI. p. 109.

The morning study of an artist.—Conversation with him on that subject.—An Italian lady and her Confessor.—The Lady's religious scruples and precaution.

LETTER XLVII. p. 118.

Busts and statues of distinguished Romans.—Of Heathen Deities.—Passion of the Greeks and Romans for sculpture.—Farnesian Hercules criticised by a Lady.—Remarks on that statue.—On the Flora.—Effect which the sight of the statues of Laocoon and his sons had on two spectators of opposite characters.—Mr. Lock's Observations on the same group.—The Antinous.—The Apollo.

LETTER XLVIII. p. 131.

The preſent Pope.—Ganganelli.—A Scotch Preſbyterian.

LETTER XLIX. p. 140.

Zeal of Pius VI.—*Inſtitution of the Jubilee.—Ceremony of building up the holy door of St. Peter's by the preſent Pope.—The ceremony of high maſs performed by the Pope on Chriſtmas-day.—Character of the preſent Pope.—He is admired by the Roman women.—The Benediction pronounced in the grand area before the church of St. Peter's.*

LETTER L. p. 149.

Preſented to the Pope.—Reflections on the ſituation of Sovereigns in general.—The Sovereign Pontiff in particular.

LETTER LI. p. 159.

Modern Romans.—Roman women compared with thoſe of England.—Portrait painting in Italy, and elſewhere.

LETTER LII. p. 169.

Carnival at Rome.—Maſquerades and other amuſements in the Corſo.—Horſe-races.—Serious

Opera.—Great ſenſibility in a young woman.—Extravagant expreſſion of a Roman Citizen at the Opera.—A Serenade on Chriſtmas morning.—Female performers prohibited on the Theatres at Rome.—Eunuchs ſubſtituted.—The effect on the minds of ſpectators.

LETTER LIII. p. 178.

Journey from Rome to Naples.—Veletri.—Otho.—Sermonetta.—Peeviſh Travellers.—Monte Circello.—Piperno.—Foſſa Nuova.

LETTER LIV. p. 187.

Terracina.—Via Appia.—Fundi.—Gaeta.—Illuſtrious French Rebels.—Bourbon.—Minturnæ.—Marius.—Hannibal.

LETTER LV. p. 198.

Naples.—Fortreſs of St. Elmo.—Converſation with a Lady regarding the Carthuſians.—Manufactures.—Number of inhabitants.

LETTER LVI. p. 206.

Manners.

LETTER LVII. p. 211.

Reſpect paid to Kings during their lives.—Freedoms uſed with their characters after their deaths.—

The King of Naples.—A game at billiards.—Characters of the King and Queen.

LETTER LVIII. p. 217.

The Neapolitan Nobles.—The Peasants.

LETTER LIX. p. 223.

Citizens. — Lawyers.— Physicians. — Clergy.— Convents.—Lazzaroni.

A VIEW OF SOCIETY AND MANNERS IN ITALY.

LETTER XXXIII.

Loretto.

PILGRIMAGES to Loretto are not ſo frequent with foreigners, or with Italians of fortune and diſtinction, as formerly, nineteen out of twenty of thoſe, who make this journey now, are poor people, who depend for their maintenance on the charity they receive on the road. To thoſe who are of ſuch a rank in life as precludes them from availing themſelves of the charitable inſtitutions for the maintenance of pilgrims, ſuch journies are attended with expence and inconveniency; and I am informed, that fathers and huſbands, in moderate or confined circumſtances, are frequently brought to

diſagreeable dilemmas, by the raſh vows of going to Loretto, which their wives or daughters are apt to make on any ſuppoſed deliverance from danger. To refuſe, is conſidered, by the whole neighbourhood, as cruel, and even impious; and to grant, is often highly diſtreſſing, particularly to ſuch huſbands as, from affection, or any other motive, do not chooſe that their wives ſhould be long out of their ſight. But the poor, who are maintained during their whole journey, and have nothing more than a bare maintenance to expect from their labour at home, to them a journey to Loretto is a party of pleaſure, as well as devotion, and by much the moſt agreeable road they can take to heaven. This being a year of jubilee, there is a far greater concourſe of pilgrims of all ranks here, at preſent, than is uſual. We have ſeen a few in their carriages, a greater number on horſeback, or on mules; or, what is ſtill more common, on aſſes. Great numbers of females come in this manner, with a male friend walking by them, as their guide and protector; but the greateſt number, of both ſexes, are on foot. When we approached near Loretto, the road was crowded with them: they generally ſet out before ſun-riſe; and, having repoſed themſelves during the heat of the day, continue their journey again in the evening. They ſing their matins, and their evening hymns, aloud. As many have fine voices and delicate ears, thoſe vocal concerts have a charming effect at a little

BRITISH MUSEUM 30 65 OCT

diſtance. During the ſtillneſs of the morning and the evening, we were ſerenaded with this ſolemn religious muſic for a conſiderable part of the road. The pilgrims on foot, as ſoon as they enter the ſuburbs, begin a hymn in honour of the Virgin, which they continue till they reach the church. The poorer ſort are received into an hoſpital, where they have bed and board for three days.

The only trade of Loretto conſiſts of roſaries, crucifixes, little Madonnas, Agnus Dei's, and medals, which are manufactured here, and ſold to pilgrims. There are great numbers of ſhops full of theſe commodities, ſome of them of a high price; but infinitely the greater part are adapted to the purſes of the buyers, and ſold for a mere trifle. The evident poverty of thoſe manufacturers and traders, and of the inhabitants of this town in general, is a ſufficient proof that the reputation of our Lady of Loretto is greatly on the decline.

In the great church, which contains the Holy Chapel, are confeſſionals, where the penitents from every country of Europe may be confeſſed in their own language, prieſts being always in waiting for that purpoſe: each of them has a long white rod in his hand, with which he touches the heads of thoſe to whom he thinks it proper to give abſolution. They place themſelves on their knees, in groupes, around the

confeſſional chair; and when the Holy Father has touched their heads with the expiatory rod, they retire, freed from the burden of their ſins, and with renewed courage to begin a freſh account.

In the ſpacious area before this church, there is an elegant marble fountain, ſupplied with water from an adjoining hill, by an aqueduct. Few even of the moſt inconſiderable towns of Italy are without the uſeful ornament of a public fountain. The embelliſhments of ſculpture and architecture are employed, with great propriety, on ſuch works, which are continually in the people's view; the air is refreſhed, and the eye delighted, by the ſtreams of water they pour forth; a ſight peculiarly agreeable in a warm climate. In this area there is alſo a ſtatue of Sixtus V. in bronze. Over the portal of the church itſelf, is a ſtatue of the Virgin; and above the middle gate, is a Latin inſcription, importing, that within is the Houſe of the Mother of God, in which the Word was made fleſh. The gates of the church are likewiſe of bronze, embelliſhed with baſſo relievos, of admirable workmanſhip; the ſubjects taken partly from the Old, and partly from the New Teſtament, and divided into different compartments. As the gates of this church are ſhut at noon, the pilgrims who arrive after that time can get no nearer the Santa Caſa than theſe gates, which are by this means, ſometimes

expoſed to the firſt violence of that holy ardour which was deſigned for the Chapel itſelf. All the ſculpture upon the gates, which is within reach of the mouths of thoſe zealots, is, in ſome degree, effaced by their kiſſes. The murder of Abel, by his brother, is upon a level with the lips of a perſon of an ordinary ſize, when kneeling. Poor Abel has been always unfortunate; had he been placed a foot higher, or lower, on the gate, he might have remained there, in ſecurity, for ages; but, in the unlucky place that the ſculptor has put him, his whole body has been almoſt entirely kiſſed away by the pilgrims; whilſt Cain ſtands, untouched, in his original altitude, frowning and fierce as ever.

I have ſaid nothing of the paintings to be ſeen here, though ſome are highly eſteemed, particularly two in the Treaſury. The ſubject of one of theſe is, the Virgin's Nativity, by Annibale Carracci; and of the other, a Holy Family, by Raphael. There are ſome others of conſiderable merit, which ornament the altars of the great church. Theſe altars, or little chapels, of which this fabric contains a great number, are lined with marble, and embelliſhed by ſculpture; but nothing within this church intereſted me ſo much as the iron grates before thoſe chapels, after I was informed that they were made of the fetters and chains of the Chriſtian ſlaves, who were freed from bondage by the glorious victory of Lepanto. From

that moment theſe iron grates commanded my attention more than all the golden lamps and candleſticks, and angels and jewels, of the Holy Chapel.

The ideas that ruſh into one's mind on hearing a circumſtance of this kind, are affecting beyond expreſſion. To think of four thouſand of our fellow-creatures, torn from the ſervice of their country and the arms of friendſhip, chained to oars, ſubjected continually to the revilings of enemies, and every kind of ignominious treatment, at once, when their ſouls were ſinking under the weight of ſuch accumulated calamity, and brought to the very verge of deſpair; at once, in one bleſſed moment, freed from ſlavery, reſtored to the embraces of their friends, and enjoying, with them, all the rapture of victory. Good God, what a ſcene! what a number of ſcenes! for the imagination, after glancing at the whole, diſtinguiſhes and ſeparates objects, and forms a thouſand groupes of the moſt pathetic kind; the fond recognition of old companions, brothers flying into each other's arms, and the extacy of fathers on the recovery of their loſt ſons. Many ſuch pictures did my fancy form, while I ſtood contemplating thoſe grates ſo truly ornamental of a Chriſtian church, and ſo perfectly congenial with a religion which requires men to *relieve the oppreſſed, and ſet the captive free.*

Happy if the followers of that religion had always obſerved this divine admonition. I ſpeak not of thoſe men who aſſume the name of Chriſtians for the purpoſes of intereſt or ambition, but of a more abſurd claſs of mankind; thoſe who, believing in Chriſtianity, endeavour to reconcile it to a conduct, and doctrines, entirely repugnant to its nature. This abſurdity has appeared in the human character from the earlieſt ages of Chriſtianity. Men have diſplayed unaffected zeal, and endeavoured to ſupport and propagate the moſt benevolent and rational of all religions, by actions worthy of demons, and arguments which ſhock common ſenſe.

The ſame perſons who praiſed and admired the heavenly benevolence of this ſentiment, Bleſſed are the merciful, for they ſhall obtain mercy; have thought it a duty to condemn their fellow-creatures to cruel deaths for ſpeculative opinions. The ſame men who admired the founder of Chriſtianity for going about, continually, doing good, have thought it a duty to ſpend their whole lives in cells, doing nothing.

And can any thing be more oppoſite to thoſe dark and inexplicable doctrines, on the belief of which, according to the conviction of many, our ſalvation depends, than this plain rule, Whatſoever ye would that men ſhould do to you, do you even ſo to them? a rule ſo plain, as to be underſtood by the moſt ſimple and

ignorant; and ſo juſt, complete, and comprehenſive as to be admired by the wiſeſt and moſt learned.

If this equitable maxim is the law and the prophets, and we learn from the higheſt authority that it is, what becomes of all thoſe myſterious webs, of various texture, which, ſince the beginning of the Chriſtian æra, Popes, Prieſts, and many of the leaders of ſectaries, have wove around it?

LETTER XXXIV.

Spoletto.

WE left Loretto after dinner, and proceeded through a beautiful country to Macerata, a ſmall town, ſituated on a hill, as the towns in Italy generally are. We only ſtayed to change horſes, and continued our journey to Tolentino; where, not thinking it expedient to begin to aſcend the Apennines in the dark, we took up our quarters at an inn, the beſt in the place, but, by many degrees, the pooreſt we had ſeen in Italy. However, as it was not for good eating or convenient bed-chambers we came to this country, that circumſtance affected us very little. Indeed, the quantity of victuals preſented us at ſupper, would have been as diſpleaſing to a perſon of Sancho Pancho's way of thinking on the ſubject of eating, as the manner they were dreſſed would have been to a nicer ſenſualiſt in that refined ſcience. The latter circumſtance prevented our regretting the former; and although we had felt ſome uneaſineſs when we were told how little proviſions there were in the houſe, the moment they appeared on the table, we were all convinced there was more than enough.

The poor people of this inn, however, ſhewed the utmoſt deſire to pleaſe. *They* muſt have unfortunate tempers indeed, who, obſerving this, could have ſhocked them by fretfulneſs, or an air of diſſatisfaction. Beſides, if the entertainment had been ſtill more homely, even thoſe travellers who are accuſtomed to the greateſt delicacies, might be induced to bear it with patience, for one night, from this conſideration, That the people of the place, who have juſt as good a natural right to the luxuries of life as themſelves, are obliged to bear it always. Nothing is more apt to raiſe indignation, than to behold men repining and fretting, on account of little inconveniencies, in the hearing of thoſe who are bearing much greater every day with cheerfulneſs. There is a want of ſenſe, as well as a want of temper, in ſuch behaviour. The only uſe of complaining of hardſhips to thoſe who cannot relieve them, muſt be to obtain ſympathy; but if thoſe to whom they complain, are ſuffering the ſame hardſhips in a greater degree, what ſympathy can thoſe repiners expect? They certainly find none.

Next morning we encountered the Apennines. The fatigue of this day's journey was compenſated by the beauty and variety of the views among thoſe mountains. On the face of one of the higheſt, I remarked a ſmall hut, with a garden near it. I was told this was inhabited by an old infirm Hermit. I could not underſtand

how a perſon in that condition could ſcramble up and down ſuch a mountain to procure for himſelf the neceſſaries of life. I was informed, he had not quitted his hermitage for ſeveral years, the neighbouring peaſants ſupplying him plentifully with all he requires. This man's reputation for ſanctity is very great, and thoſe who take the trouble of carrying him proviſions, think themſelves well repaid by his prayers.

I imagine I am acquainted with a country where proviſions are in greater plenty than in the Apennines; and yet the greateſt ſaint in the nation, who ſhould take up his reſidence on one of its mountains, would be in great danger of ſtarving, if he depended for his ſuſtenance upon the proviſions that ſhould be carried up to him in exchange for his prayers.

There are mountains and precipices among the Apennines, which do not appear contemptible in the eyes even of thoſe who have travelled among the Alps; while on the other hand, thoſe delightful plains, contained within the boſom of the former, are infinitely ſuperior, in beauty and fertility, to the vallies among the latter. We now entered the rich province of Umbria, and ſoon after arrived at Foligno, a thriving town, in which there is more appearance of induſtry than in any of the towns we have ſeen, ſince we left Ancona; there are conſiderable manufactures of paper, cloth and ſilk. In a convent of Nuns, is

a famous picture by Raphael, generally viſited by travellers, and much admired by connoiſſeurs.

The ſituation of this town is peculiarly happy. It ſtands in a charming valley, laid out in corn-fields and vine-yards, interſected by mulberry and almond-trees, and watered by the river Clitumnus; the view terminating on one ſide by hills crowned with cities, and on the other by the loftieſt mountains of the Apennines. I never experienced ſuch a ſudden and agreeable change of climate, as on deſcending from thoſe mountains, in many places, at preſent, covered with ſnow, to this pleaſant valley of Umbria,

Where weſtern gales eternally reſide,
And all the ſeaſons laviſh all their pride.

From Foligno to Vene, the road lies through this fine plain. A little before you come to the poſt-houſe at Vene, on the right hand, there is a little building; the front which looks to the valley, is adorned with ſix Corinthian pillars; the two in the middle enriched by a laurel foliage: on one ſide, is a crucifix in baſſo relievo, with vine branches curling around it. On this building, there are ſome inſcriptions which mention the *reſurrection*. Some, who think the architecture too fine for the firſt ages of Chriſtianity, and the Temple too old to have been built ſince the revival of that art, have conjectured, that this little edifice is antique, and originally

erected by the ancient inhabitants of Umbria, as a temple in honour of the river God Clitumnus; but, at some subsequent period, converted into a Christian chapel, and the crucifix and inscriptions added after its consecration. Other very respectable judges think, the style of architecture is by no means pure, but adulterated by meretricious ornament, and worthy enough of the first ages of Christianity.

Mr. Addison has given many quotations from the Latin poets, in honour of this river, all of which countenance the popular opinion with regard to the quality of the water. The breed of white cattle, which gave such reputation to the river, still remains in this country. We saw many of them as we passed, some milk white, but the greatest numbers of a whitish grey. The common people still retain the ancient opinion, with respect to the effect of the water. Spoletto, the capital of Umbria, is situated on a high rock, the ascent to which is very steep on all sides. This town retains little appearance of its ancient importance. Keysler says, that, like other paltry towns in Italy, it exhibits bombastic inscriptions concerning its antiquity, and many trivial occurrences which have happened there; the only inscription, however, which he quotes, and the only one which I saw, is that over the Porta di Fuga, from which the Carthaginian army is supposed to have been repulsed.

ANNIBAL
CÆSIS AD THRASYMENUM ROMANIS
URBEM ROMAM INFENSO AGMINE PETENS,
SPOLETO MAGNA SUORUM CLADE REPULSUS,
INSIGNI FUGA PORTÆ NOMEN FECIT.

I cannot perceive any thing bombaſtic in this; Livy mentions the fact in his twenty-ſecond book, in the following terms:

Annibal recto itinere per Umbriam uſque ad Spoletum venit, inde quum perpopulato agro urbem oppugnare adortus eſſet, cum magna cæde ſuorum repulſus, conjectans ex unius coloniæ haud nimis proſpere tentatæ viribus quanta moles Romanæ urbis eſſet.

If the inhabitants of the greateſt capital in the world had equal authority for their anceſtors having repulſed ſuch a general as Hannibal, would they not be inclined to receive it as truth, and to tranſmit it to the lateſt poſterity?

This town is ſtill ſupplied with water, by means of an antique aqueduct, one of the moſt entire, and the higheſt in Europe. In the centre, where the height is greateſt, there is a double arcade; the other arches diminiſh in height, as they recede from it, towards the ſloping ſides of the two mountains which this magnificent work unites.

In the cathedral, there is a picture of the Virgin by St. Luke; but we had already ſeen ſufficient ſpecimens of this ſaint's abilities, as a ſculptor and a painter, and we had not the leaſt curioſity to ſee any more.

LETTER XXXV.

Rome.

LEAVING Spoletto, we paſſed over the higheſt of the Apennines, and then deſcended through a foreſt of olive trees, to the fruitful valley in which Terni is ſituated, on the river Nera. It was formerly called Interamna, on account of its ſtanding between two branches of that river. The valley which ſtretches from this town to Terni, is exuberantly fertile, being finely expoſed to the ſouth ſun, and watered by the Nera, which by its beauteous windings, divides the plain into peninſulas of various ſhapes. The Emperor Tacitus, and his brother Florianus, were natives of Terni; but the greateſt pride of that city is, its having given birth to Tacitus the Hiſtorian.

I am almoſt aſhamed to tell you that we did not go to ſee the famous catara&, near this town, which is uſually viſited by travellers, and which, by all accounts, is ſo worthy of their curioſity. Innumerable ſtreams from the higheſt Apennines, meeting in one channel, form the river Velino, which flows placidly, for ſome time, through a plain almoſt horizontal, and

afterwards, when the river becomes more rapid by the contracting and ſloping of the channel, the plain terminates of a ſudden in a precipice three hundred feet high, over which, the river ruſhing, daſhes with ſuch violence againſt the rocky bottom, that a vaſt cloud of watery ſmoke is raiſed all around. The river Velino does not long ſurvive the fall, but broken, groaning and foaming, ſoon finiſhes his courſe in the Nera. Mr. Addiſon is of opinion, that Virgil had this gulph in his eye when he deſcribed the place in the middle of Italy, through which the Fury Alecto deſcended into Tartarus.

A very heavy rain which fell while we were at Terni, the fatigue and difficulty of climbing up the Monte di Marmore, from whence this fall appears to the greateſt advantage, and our impatience to be at Rome, prevented us from ſeeing that celebrated cataract, which we regretted the leſs, as we had frequently ſeen one of the ſame kind in Scotland, about twelve miles above Hamilton, at a place called Corace, where the river Clyde, falling perpendicular from a vaſt height, produces the ſame effects, in every reſpect, unleſs, that he outlives the accident, and continues his courſe for near fifty miles before he joins the Atlantic ocean.

The diſtance from Terni to Narni is about ſeven miles; the road is uncommonly good, and the country on each ſide delightful. When we

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A very heavy rain which fell while we were at Terni, the fatigue and difficulty of climbing up the Monte di Marmore, from whence this fall appears to the greateſt advantage, and our impatience to be at Rome, prevented us from ſeeing that celebrated cataract, which we regretted the leſs, as we had frequently ſeen one of the ſame kind in Scotland, about twelve miles above Hamilton, at a place called Corace, where the river Clyde, falling perpendicular from a vaſt height, produces the ſame effects, in every reſpect, unleſs, that he outlives the accident, and continues his courſe for near fifty miles before he joins the Atlantic ocean.

The diſtance from Terni to Narni is about ſeven miles; the road is uncommonly good, and the country on each ſide delightful. When we

came near Narni, while the chaiſes proceeded to the town, I walked to take a view of the bridge of Auguſtus. This ſtately fabric is wholly of marble, and without cement, as many other antique buildings are. Only one of the arches remains intire, which is the firſt on the ſide of the river where I was; under it, there was no water; it is one hundred and fifty feet wide. The next arch, below which the river flows, is twenty feet wider, and has a conſiderable ſlope, being higher on the ſide next the firſt arch, than on that next the third. The remaining two arches are, in every reſpect, ſmaller than the two firſt. What could be the reaſon of ſuch ungraceful irregularity in a work, in other reſpects ſo magnificent, and upon which ſo much labour and expence muſt have been beſtowed, I cannot imagine. It is doubtful, whether there were originally four arches, or only three; for that which is ſuppoſed by ſome to be the baſis from which the two leſſer articles ſprung; is thought by others, to be the remains of a ſquare pillar, raiſed ſome time after the bridge was built, to ſupport the middle of the third arch; which, on the ſuppoſition that there were but three, muſt have been of a very extraordinary width.

This fabric is uſually called Auguſtus's Bridge, and Mr. Addiſon thinks that without doubt Martial alludes to it, in the ninety-ſecond Epigram of the ſeventh book; but ſome other very

judicious travellers imagine, it is the remains of an aqueduct, becauſe thoſe arches joined two mountains, and are infinitely higher than was neceſſary for a bridge over the little river which flows under them. It has alſo been ſuppoſed, not without great appearance of probability, that this fabric was originally intended to ſerve the purpoſes of both.

As the rain ſtill continued, my curioſity to ſee this fine ruin procured me a ſevere drenching: this I received with due reſignation, as a puniſhment for having been intimidated by rain, from viſiting the fine caſcade at Terni. It was with great difficulty I got up the hill, by a path which I thought was ſhorter and eaſier than the high road; this unfortunately led to no gate. At laſt, however, I obſerved a broken part of the wall, over which I immediately clambered into the town. Martial takes notice of the difficulty of acceſs to this town.

Narnia, ſulphureo quam gurgite candidus amnis
Circuit, ancipiti vix adeunda Jugo.

The town itſelf is very poor, and thinly inhabited. It boaſts, however, of being the native city of the Emperor Nerva, and ſome other celebrated men.

The road from Narni to the poſt-houſe at Otricoli, is exceeding rough and mountainous.

This is a very poor village, but advantageouſly ſituated on a riſing ground. Between this and the Tiber, at ſome little diſtance from the road, there is a conſiderable tract of ground, covered with many looſe antique fragments and vaults: theſe are generally conſidered as the ruins of the ancient Ocriculum. We paſſed along this road early in the morning, and were entertained, great part of the way, with vocal muſic from the pilgrims, ſeveral hordes of whom we met near this place, on their return from Rome, where they had been on account of the jubilee.

The only place of note between Otricoli and Rome, is Civita Caſtellana. Terni is the laſt town of the province of Umbria, and Caſtellana the firſt of ancient Latium, coming to Rome by the Flaminian way. Caſtellana is conſidered, by many antiquarians, as the Feſcennium of the ancients; a ſchoolmaſter of which, as we are informed by Livy, by an unexampled inſtance of wickedneſs, betrayed a number of the ſons of the principal citizens into the power of the Dictator Camillus, at that time beſieging the place. The generous Roman, equally abhorring the treachery and the traitor, ordered this baſe man to be ſtripped, to have his hands tied behind, and to be delivered over to the boys, who, armed with rods, beat him back to Feſcennium, and delivered him up to their parents, to be uſed as they ſhould think he deſerved.

Civita Caſtellana ſtands upon a high rock, and muſt formerly have been a place of great ſtrength, but is now in no very flouriſhing condition. Many of the towns I have mentioned, lying on the Road to Rome, by the Flaminian way, have ſuffered, at different periods, more than thoſe of any other part of Italy; by the inroads of Viſigoths and Huns, as well as by ſome incurſions of a later date.

This, I am convinced, is the only country in the world, where the fields become more deſolate as you approach the capital. After having traverſed the cultivated and fertile vallies of Umbria, one is affected with double emotion at beholding the deplorable ſtate of poor neglected Latium. For ſeveral poſts before you arrive at Rome, few villages, little cultivation, and ſcarcely any inhabitants are to be ſeen. In the Campania of Rome, formerly the beſt cultivated and beſt peopled ſpot in the world, no houſes, no trees, no incloſures; nothing but the ſcattered ruins of temples and tombs, preſenting the idea of a country depopulated by a peſtilence. All is motionleſs, ſilent, and forlorn.

In the midſt of theſe deſerted fields the ancient Miſtreſs of the World rears her head, in melancholy majeſty.

LETTER XXXVI.

Rome.

YOU will not be ſurpriſed at my ſilence for ſome weeks paſt. On arriving at a place where there are ſo many intereſting objects as at Rome, we are generally ſelfiſh enough to indulge our own curioſity very amply, before we gratify that of our friends in any degree. My firſt care was to wait on the Prince Guiſtiniani, for whom we had letters from Count Mahoni, the Spaniſh ambaſſador at Vienna, to whoſe niece that Prince is married. Nothing can exceed the politeneſs and attention the Prince and Princeſs have ſhewn. He waited immediately on the D— of H——, and inſiſted on taking us, in his own carriage, to every houſe of diſtinction. Two or three hours a day were ſpent in this ceremony. After being once preſented, no farther introduction or invitation is neceſſary.

Our mornings are generally ſpent in viſiting the antiquities, and the paintings in the palaces. On thoſe occaſions we are accompanied by Mr. Byres, a gentleman of probity, knowledge, and real taſte. We generally paſs two

or three hours every evening at the converſazionis; I ſpeak in the plural number, for we are ſometimes at ſeveral in the ſame evening. It frequently happens, that three or four, or more, of the nobility, have theſe aſſemblies at the ſame time; and almoſt all the company of a certain rank in Rome make it a point, if they go to any, to go to all; ſo that, although there is a great deal of buſtle, and a continual change of place, there is ſcarcely any change of company, or any variation in the amuſement, except what the change of place occaſions: but this circumſtance alone is often found an uſeful accomplice in the murder of a tedious evening; for when the company find no great amuſement in one place, they fly to another, in hopes they may be better entertained. Theſe hopes are generally diſappointed; but that does not prevent them from trying a third, and a fourth; and although to whatever length the experiment is puſhed, it always terminates in new diſappointments, yet, at laſt, the evening is diſpatched; and, without this locomotive reſource, I have ſeen people in danger of diſpatching themſelves. This buſtle, and running about after objects which give no permanent ſatisfaction, and without fully knowing whence we came, or whither we are going, you'll ſay, is a mighty ſilly buſineſs. It is ſo;—and, after all the ſwelling importance that ſome people aſſume, Pray what is human life?

Having told you what five or ſix converſazionis, are, I ſhall endeavour to give you ſome idea what *one* is. Theſe aſſemblies are always in the principal apartment of the palace, which is generally on the ſecond, but ſometimes on the third floor. It is not always perfectly eaſy to find this apartment, becauſe it ſometimes happens that the ſtaircaſe is very ill lighted. On entering the hall, where the footmen of the company are aſſembled, your name is pronounced aloud, by ſome ſervants of the family, and repeated by others, as you walk through ſeveral rooms. Thoſe whoſe names are not known, are announced by the general denomination of i Cavalieri Foreſtieri, or Ingleſi, as you paſs through the different rooms, till you come to that in which the company are aſſembled, where you are received by the maſter or miſtreſs of the houſe, who ſits exactly within the door for that purpoſe. Having made a ſhort compliment there, you mix with the company, which is ſometimes ſo large, that none but the ladies can have the conveniency of ſitting. Notwithſtanding the great ſize and number of the rooms in the Italian palaces, it frequently happens that the company are ſo preſſed together, that you can with difficulty move from one room to another. There always is a greater number of men than women; no lady comes without a gentleman to hand her. This gentleman, who acts the part of Cavaliero Servente, may be her relation in any degree, or

her lover, or both. It is allowed him to be connected with her in any way but one—he must not be her husband. Familiarities between man and wife are still connived at in this country however, provided they are carried on in private; but for a man to be seen hand in hand with his wife, in public, would not be tolerated.

At Cardinal Berni's assembly, which is usually more crowded than any in Rome, the company are served with coffee, lemonade, and iced confections of various kinds; but this custom is not universal. In short, at a conversazione, you have an opportunity of seeing a number of well-dressed people, you speak a few words to those you are acquainted with, you bow to the rest, and enjoy the happiness of being squeezed and pressed among the best company in Rome. I do not know what more can be said of these assemblies; only it may be necessary, to prevent mistakes, to add, that a conversazione is a place where there is no conversation. They break up about nine o'clock, all but a small select company, who are invited to supper. But the present race of Romans are by no means so fond of convivial entertainments, as their predecessors. The magnificence of the Roman nobility displays itself now in other articles than the luxuries of the table: they generally dine at home, in a very private manner. Strangers are seldom invited to dinner, except by the

foreign ambaſſadors. The hoſpitality of Cardinal Bernis alone makes up for every deficiency of that nature. There is no ambaſſador from the Court of Great-Britain at Rome, but the Engliſh feel no want of one. If the French Cardinal had been inſtructed by his court to be peculiarly attentive to them, he could not be more ſo than he is. Nothing can exceed the elegant magnificence of his table, nor the ſplendid hoſpitality in which he lives. Years have not impaired the wit and vivacity for which he was diſtinguiſhed in his youth; and no man could ſupport the pretenſions of the French nation to ſuperior politeneſs, better than their ambaſſador at Rome.

There are no lamps lighted in the ſtreets at night; and all Rome would be in utter darkneſs, were it not for the candles, which the devotion of individuals ſometimes place before certain ſtatues of the Virgin. Thoſe appear faintly glimmering at vaſt intervals, like ſtars in a cloudy night. The lackeys carry dark lanthorns behind the carriages of people of the firſt diſtinction. The Cardinals, and other Eccleſiaſtics, do not chooſe to have their coaches ſeen before the door of every houſe they viſit. In the midſt of this darkneſs, you will naturally conclude, that amorous aſſignations in the ſtreets are not unfrequent among the inferior people. When a carriage, with a lanthorn behind it, accidentally comes near a couple who do not

wiſh to be known, one of them calls out, "Volti la lanterna," and is obeyed; the carriage paſſing without farther notice being taken. Venus, as you know, has always been particularly reſpected at Rome, on account of her amour with Anchiſes.

——— Genus unde Latinum
Albanique patres, atque alta mœnia Romæ.

The Italians, in general, have a remarkable, air of gravity, which they preſerve even when the ſubject of their converſation is gay. I obſerved ſomething of this at Venice, but I think it is much ſtronger at Rome. The Roman ladies have a languor in their countenances, which promiſes as much ſenſibility as the briſk look of the French; and, without the volubility of the latter, or the frankneſs of the Venetian women, they ſeem no way averſe to form connections with ſtrangers. The D— of H—— was preſented to a beautiful young Lady at one of the aſſemblies. In the courſe of converſation he happened to ſay, That he had heard ſhe had been married very lately. She anſwered, with precipitation, "Signor ſi—ma mio marito è "uno Vecchio." She then added, ſhaking her head, and in a moſt affecting tone of voice, "O ſantiſſima Virgine quanto è Vecchio!"

LETTER XXXVII.

Rome.

AUTHORS differ very much in opinion with reſpect to the number of inhabitants which Rome contained at the period when it was moſt populous. Some accounts make them ſeven millions, and others a ſtill greater number. Theſe ſeem all to be incredible exaggerations. It is not probable, that what is properly called the city of Rome, ever extended beyond the wall built by Beliſarius, after he had defeated the Goths. This wall has been frequently repaired ſince, and is ſtill ſtanding; it is about thirteen or fourteen miles in circuit, which is nearly the ſize that Rome was of, according to Pliny, in the days of Veſpaſian. Thoſe who aſſert, that the number of inhabitants in ancient Rome, when it was moſt populous, could not exceed a million, excluſive of ſlaves, are thought moderate in their calculation; but when we conſider that the circumference of thirteen or fourteen miles is not equal to that of either Paris or London; that the Campus Martius, which is the beſt built part of modern Rome, was a field, without a houſe upon it, anciently; and that the riſing ground, where St. Peter's church and the Vatican ſtand, was no part of

old Rome; it will be difficult to conceive that ever Rome could boaſt a million of inhabitants. For my own part, if the wall of Beliſarius is admitted as the boundary of the ancient city, I cannot imagine it to have, at any time, contained above five or ſix hundred thouſand, without ſuppoſing the maſters of the world to have been the worſt lodged people in it.

But if, in the computations above mentioned, the ſuburbs are included; if thoſe who lived without the walls are conſidered as inhabitants; in that caſe there will be room enough for any number, the limits of the ſuburbs not being aſcertained.

The buildings immediately without the walls of Rome, which were connectedly continued ſo as to merit the name of ſuburbs, were certainly of vaſt extent; and with thoſe of the town itſelf, muſt have contained a prodigious number of people. By a calculation made by Mr. Byres, the Circus Maximus was of ſufficient ſize to accommodate three hundred and eighty thouſand ſpectators; and we are told by the Latin poets, that it was uſually full. Now if allowance is made for the ſuperannuated, the ſick, and infirm; alſo for children, and thoſe employed in their private buſineſs, and for ſlaves, who were not permitted to remain in the Circus during the games; Mr. Byres imagines that ſuch a number as three hundred and

eighty thouſand ſpectators could not be ſupplied by a city and ſuburbs, the number of whoſe inhabitants were much under three millions.

Whatever may have been the extent of the ſuburbs of Rome, it is probable they were only formed of ordinary houſes, and inhabited by people of inferior rank. There are no remains of palaces, or magnificent buildings of any kind, to be now ſeen near the walls, or indeed over the whole Campania; yet it is aſſerted by ſome authors, that this wide ſurface was peopled, at one period, like a continued village; and we are told of ſtrangers, who, viewing this immenſe plain covered with houſes, imagined they had already entered Rome, when they were thirty miles from the walls of that city.

Some of the ſeven hills on which Rome was built, appear now but gentle ſwellings, owing to the intervals between them being greatly raiſed by the rubbiſh of ruined houſes. Some have hardly houſes of any kind upon them, being entirely laid out in gardens and vineyards. It is generally thought, that two-thirds of the ſurface within the walls are in this ſituation, or covered with ruins; and, by the information I have the greateſt reliance on, the number of the inhabitants at preſent is about one hundred and ſeventy thouſand, which, though greatly inferior to what Rome contained in the days of its ancient power, is more than it has been, for the moſt

part, able to boaſt ſince the fall of the Empire. There is good authority for believing that this city, at particular periods ſince that time, ſome of them not very remote, has been reduced to between thirty and forty thouſand inhabitants. The numbers have gradually increaſed during the whole of this century. As it was much leſs expenſive to purchaſe new ground for building upon, than to clear any ruins which, by time, had acquired the conſiſtence of rock, great part of the modern city is built on what was the ancient Campus Martius.

Some of the principal ſtreets are of conſiderable length, and perfectly ſtraight. That called the Corſo is the moſt frequented. It runs from the Porto del Popolo, along the ſide of the Campus Martius, next to the ancient city. Here the nobility diſplay their equipages during the carnival, and take the air in the evenings in fine weather. It is indeed the great ſcene of Roman magnificence and amuſement.

The ſhops on each ſide, are three or four feet higher than the ſtreet; and there is a path for the conveniency of foot paſſengers, on a level with the ſhops. The palaces, of which there are ſeveral in this ſtreet, range in a line with the houſes, having no court before them, as the hotels in Paris have; and not being ſhut up from the ſight of the citizens by high gloomy walls, as Devonſhire and Burlington houſes in

London are. Such diſmal barricades are more ſuitable to the unſocial character of a proud Baron, in the days of ariſtocratic tyranny, than to the hoſpitable benevolent diſpoſition of their preſent proprietor.

The Corſo, I have ſaid, commences at the fine area immediately within the Porto del Popolo. This is the gate by which we entered Rome; it is built in a noble ſtyle of elegant ſimplicity, from the deſign of Michael Angelo, executed by Bernini.

The Strada Felice, in the higher part of the city, is about a mile and a half in length from the Trinità del Monte, to the church of St. John Lateran, on the Pincean hill. This ſtreet runs in a ſtraight line, but the view is interrupted by a fine church called St. Maria Maggiore. The Strada Felice is croſſed by another ſtraight ſtreet, called the Strada di Porta Pia, terminated at one end by that gate; and at the other by four coloſſal ſtatues in white marble, of two horſes led by two men; ſuppoſed by ſome, to be repreſentations of Alexander taming Bucephalus; and according to others, of Caſtor and Pollux. They are placed before the Pope's palace, on the Quirinal Hill, and have a noble effect.

It would be more difficult to convey an idea of the ſmaller and leſs regular ſtreets. I ſhall therefore only obſerve, in general, that Rome

at preſent exhibits a ſtrange mixture of magnificent and intereſting, common and beggarly objects; the former conſiſts of palaces, churches, fountains, and above all, the remains of antiquity. The latter comprehend all the reſt of the city. The church of St. Peter's, in the opinion of many, ſurpaſſes, in ſize and magnificence, the fineſt monuments of ancient architecture. The Grecian and Roman temples were more diſtinguiſhed for the elegance of their form, than their magnitude. The Pantheon, which was erected to all the Gods, is the moſt entire antique temple in Rome. It is ſaid, that Michael Angelo, to confirm the triumph of modern over ancient architecture, made the dome of St. Peter's of the ſame diameter with the Pantheon; raiſing the immenſe fabric upon four pilaſters; whereas the whole circle of the rotunda reſts upon the ground. This great artiſt, perhaps, was delighted with the idea of being thought as ſuperior to the ancient architects, as he was conſcious of being inferior to ſome of the ſculptors of antiquity.

All who have ſeen St. Paul's in London may, by an enlargement of its dimenſions, form ſome idea of the external appearance of St. Peter's. But the reſemblance fails entirely on comparing them within; St. Peter's being lined, in many parts, with the moſt precious and beautiful marble, adorned with valuable pictures, and all the powers of ſculpture.

The approach to St. Peter's church excels that to St. Paul's in a ſtill greater proportion, than the former ſurpaſſes the latter either in ſize, or in the richneſs and beauty of the internal ornaments. A magnificent portico advances on each ſide from the front, by which means a ſquare court is formed immediately before the ſteps which lead into the church. The two porticoes form two ſides of the ſquare, the third is cloſed by the front of the church, and the fourth is open. A colonnade, four columns deep, commences at the extremities of the porticoes; and embracing, in an oval direction, a ſpace far wider than the ſquare, forms the moſt magnificent area that perhaps ever was ſeen before any building. This oval colonnade is crowned with a baluſtrade, ornamented by a great number of ſtatues; and conſiſts of above three hundred large pillars, forming three ſeparate walks, which lead to the advanced portico, and from that into the church. In the middle of the immenſe area, ſtands an Egyptian obeliſk of granite; and to the right and left of this, two very beautiful fountains refreſh the atmoſphere with ſtreams of clear water. The delighted eye glancing over theſe ſplendid objects, would reſt with complete ſatisfaction on the ſtupendous fabric to which they ſerve as embelliſhments, if the façade of this celebrated church had been equal in beauty and elegance to the reſt of the building. But this is by no means the caſe, and every impartial judge muſt acknowledge, that

the front of St. Peter's is, in thoſe particulars, inferior to that of our St. Paul's.

The length of St. Peter's, taken on the outſide, is exactly ſeven hundred and thirty feet; the breadth five hundred and twenty; and the height, from the pavement to the top of the croſs, which crowns the cupola, four hundred and fifty. The grand portico before the entrance, is two hundred and ſixteen feet in length, and forty in breadth.

It is uſual to deſire ſtrangers, on their firſt entering this church, to gueſs at the ſize of the objects, which, on account of the diſtance, always ſeem leſs than they are in reality. The ſtatues of the Angels, in particular, which ſupport the founts of holy water, when viewed from the door, ſeem no bigger than children; but when you approach nearer, you perceive they are ſix feet high. We make no ſuch miſtake on ſeeing a living man at the ſame, or a greater diſtance; becauſe the knowledge we have of a man's real ſize precludes the poſſibility of our being miſtaken, and we make allowance for the diminution which diſtance occaſions; but Angels, and other figures in ſculpture, having no determined ſtandard, but being under the arbitrary will of the ſtatuary, who gives them the bulk of giants or dwarfs as beſt ſuits his purpoſe, we do not know what allowance to make; and the eye, unuſed to ſuch large maſſes,

is confounded, and incapacitated from forming a right judgment of an object ſix feet high, or of any other dimenſions, which it was not previouſly acquainted with.

It is not my deſign to attempt a deſcription of the ſtatues, baſſo relievos, columns, pictures, and various ornaments of this church; ſuch an account, faithfully executed, would fill volumes. The fineſt of all the ornaments have a probability of being longer preſerved than would once have been imagined, by the aſtoniſhing improvements which have of late been made in the art of copying pictures in Moſaic. Some of the artiſts here, have already made copies with a degree of accuracy, which no body could believe who had not ſeen the performances. By this means, the works of Raphael, and other great painters, will be tranſmitted to a later poſterity than they themſelves expected; and although all the beauty of the originals cannot be retained in the copy, it would be groſs affectation to deny that a great part of it is. How happy would it make the real lovers of the art in this age, to have ſuch ſpecimens of the genius of Zeuxis, Apelles, and other ancient painters!

It has been frequently remarked, that the proportions of this church are ſo fine, and the ſymmetry of its different parts ſo exquiſite, that the whole ſeems conſiderably ſmaller than it really is. It was, however, certainly intended to appear

a great and ſublime object, and to produce admiration by the vaſtneſs of its dimenſions. I cannot, therefore, be of opinion, that any thing which has a tendency to defeat this effect, can with propriety be called an excellence. I ſhould on the contrary imagine, that if the architect could have made the church appear larger than it is in reality, this would have been a more deſirable effect; provided it could have been produced without diminiſhing our admiration in ſome more material point. If this could not be accompliſhed; if it is abſolutely certain, that thoſe proportions in architecture, which produce the moſt beautiful effect on the whole, always make a building ſeem ſmaller than it is; this ought rather to be mentioned as an unfortunate than as a fortunate circumſtance. The more I reflect on this, it appears to me the more certain, that no ſyſtem of proportions, which has the effect of making a large building appear ſmall, is *therefore* excellent. If the property of reducing great things to little ones is inherent in all harmonious proportions; it is, in my opinion, an imperfection, and much to be lamented. In ſmall buildings, where we expect to derive our pleaſure from grace and elegance, the evil may be borne; but in edifices of vaſt dimenſions, capable of ſublimity from their bulk, the vice of diminiſhing is not to be compenſated by harmony. The ſublime has no equivalent.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Rome.

THE grand proceſſion of the Poſſeſſo took place a few days ago. This is a ceremony performed by every Pope, as ſoon as conveniency will permit, after the conclave has declared in his favour. It is equivalent to the coronation in England, or the conſecration at Rheims. On this occaſion, the Pope goes to the Baſilica of St. John Lateran, and, as the phraſe is, takes poſſeſſion of it. This church, they tell you, is the moſt ancient of all the churches in Rome, and the mother of all the churches in chriſtendom. When he has got poſſeſſion of this, therefore, he *muſt* be the real head of the Chriſtian church, and Chriſt's vicegerent upon earth. From St. John Lateran's, he proceeds to the Capitol, and receives the keys of that fortreſs; after which, it is equally clear, that as an earthly prince, he ought, like the ancient poſſeſſors of the Capitol, to have a ſupremacy over all kings.

The prince Guiſtiniani procured a place for us, at the Senator's houſe in the Capitol, from whence we might ſee the proceſſion to the greateſt advantage. On arriving, we were ſurpriſed to find the main body of the Palace, as well as

founded on the site of a palace of a consul elect put to death A.D. 62, in the

the Palazzo dé Conſervatori, and the Muſeum, which form the two wings, all hung with crimſon ſilk, laced with gold. The baſes and capitals of the pillars and pilaſters, where the ſilk could not be accurately applied, were gilt. Only imagine, what a figure the Farneſian Hercules would make, dreſſed in a ſilk ſuit, like a French petit-maitre. To cover the noble ſimplicity of Michael Angelo's architecture with ſuch frippery by way of ornament, is, in my mind, a piece of refinement equally laudable.

Throwing an eye on the Pantheon, and comparing it with the Campidoglio in its preſent dreſs, the beauty and juſtneſs of the following lines ſeemed more ſtriking than ever.

Mark, how the dread Pantheon ſtands,
Amid the domes of modern hands,
Amid the toys of idle ſtate,
How ſimply, how ſeverely great!

We were led to a balcony, where a number of ladies of the firſt diſtinction in Rome were aſſembled. There were no men excepting a very few ſtrangers; moſt part of the Roman noblemen have ſome function in the proceſſion. The inſtant of his Holineſs's departure from the Vatican, was announced by a diſcharge of cannon from the caſtle of St. Angelo; on the top of which, the ſtandard of the church had been flying ever ſince morning. We had a full view

time of Nero. Plautius
Lateranus

of the cavalcade, on its return from the church, as it aſcended to the Capitol. The officers of the Pope's horſe guards were dreſſed in a ſtyle equally rich and becoming. It was ſomething between the Hungarian and Spaniſh dreſs. I do not know whether the king of Pruſſia would approve of the great profuſion of plumage they wore in their hats; but it is pictureſque, and ſhowy qualities are the moſt eſſential to the guards of his Holineſs. The Swiſs guards were, on this occaſion, dreſſed with leſs propriety; their uniforms were real coats of mail, with iron helmets on their heads, as if they had been to take the Capitol by ſtorm, and expected a vigorous reſiſtance. Their appearance was ſtrongly contraſted with that of the Roman Barons, who were on horſeback, without boots, and in full dreſs; each of them was preceded by four pages, their hair hanging in regular ringlets to the middle of their backs; they were followed by a number of ſervants in rich liveries. Biſhops and other eccleſiaſtics ſucceeded the Barons; and then came the Cardinals on horſeback, in their purple robes, which covered every part of the horſes, except the head. You may be ſure that the horſes employed at ſuch ceremonies are the gentleſt that can be found; for if they were at all unruly, they might not only injure the ſurrounding crowd, but throw their Eminencies, who are not celebrated for their ſkill in horſemanſhip. Laſt of all comes the Pope himſelf, mounted on a milk white mule, diſtributing

bleſſings with an unſpairing hand among the multitude, who follow him with acclamations of Viva il Santo Padre, and proſtrating themſelves on the ground before his mule, Benedizione Santo Padre. The Holy Father took particular care to wave his hand in the form of the croſs, that the bleſſings he pronounced at the ſame inſtant might have the greater efficacy. As his Holineſs is employed in this manner during the whole proceſſion, he cannot be ſuppoſed to give the leaſt attention to his mule, the bridle of which is held by two perſons who walk by his ſide, with ſome others, to catch the *infallible* Father of the Church, and to prevent his being thrown to the ground, in caſe the mule ſhould ſtumble.

At the entrance of the Capitol he was met by the Senator of Rome, who, falling on his knees, delivered the keys into the hands of his Holineſs, who pronounced a bleſſing over him, and reſtored him the keys. Proceeding from the Capitol, the Pope was met by a deputation of Jews, ſoon after he had paſſed through the Arch of Titus. They were headed by the chief Rabbi, who preſented him with a long ſcroll of parchment, on which is written the whole law of Moſes in Hebrew. His Holineſs received the parchment in a very gracious manner, telling the Rabbi at the ſame time, that he accepted his preſent out of reſpect to the law itſelf, but entirely rejected his interpretation; for the ancient

law, having been fulfilled by the coming of the Meſſiah, was no longer in force. As this was not a convenient time or place for the Rabbi to enter into a controverſy upon the ſubject, he bowed his head in ſilence, and retired with his countrymen, in the full conviction, that the falſehood of the Pope's aſſertion would be made manifeſt to the whole univerſe in due time. His Holineſs, mean while, proceeded in triumph through the principal ſtreets, to the Vatican.

This proceſſion, I am told, is one of the moſt ſhowy and magnificent which takes place, on any occaſion, in this city; where there are certainly more ſolemn exhibitions of the ſame kind than in any other country; yet, on the whole, I own it did not afford me much ſatisfaction; nor could all their pomp and finery prevent an uneaſy recollection, not unmixed with ſentiments of indignation, from obtruding on my mind. To feel unmixed admiration in beholding the Pope and his Cardinals marching in triumph to the Capitol, one muſt forget thoſe who walked in triumph formerly to the ſame place; forget entirely that ſuch men as Camillus, Scipio, Paulus Æmilius, and Pompey, ever exiſted; they muſt forget Cato, whoſe campaign in Africa was ſo much admired by Lucan, that he declares, he would rather have had the glory of that ſingle campaign than Pompey's three triumphs, and all the honour he obtained by finiſhing the Jugurthan war.

Hunc ego per Syrtes, Libyæque extrema triumphum
Ducere maluerim, quam ter Capitolia curru
Scandere Pompeii, quam frangere colla Jugurthæ.

We muſt forget Caius Caſſius, Marcus Brutus, and all the great and virtuous men of ancient Rome, whom we have admired from our childhood, and of whoſe great qualities our admiration increaſes with our experience and knowledge of the preſent race of mankind. To be in the Capitol, and not think and ſpeak of the worthies of the ancient Republic, is almoſt impoſſible.

Quis te magne Cato tacitum; aut te Coſſe relinquat?
Quis Gracchi genus? aut geminos, duo fulmina belli,
Scipiadas, &c. &c.

LETTER XXXIX.

Rome.

HAVING ſaid ſo much of St. Peter's, unqueſtionably the fineſt piece of modern architecture in Rome, allow me to mention ſome of the beſt ſpecimens of the ancient. I ſhall begin with the Pantheon, which, though not the largeſt of the Roman temples, is the moſt perfect which now remains. The Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, and the Temple of Peace, if we may truſt to the accounts we have of the firſt, and to the ruins of the ſecond, in the Campo Vaccino, were both much larger than the Pantheon. In ſpite of the depredations which this laſt has ſuſtained from Goths, Vandals, and Popes, it ſtill remains a beauteous monument of Roman taſte. The pavilion of the great altar, which ſtands under the cupola in St. Peter's, and the four wreathed pillars of Corinthian braſs which ſupport it, were formed out of the ſpoils of the Pantheon, which, after all, and with the weight of eighteen hundred years upon its head, has ſtill a probability of outliving its proud rapacious rival. From the round form of this temple, it has obtained the name of Rotunda. Its height is a hundred and fifty feet, and its diameter nearly the ſame.

Within, it is divided into eight parts; the gate at which you enter forming one: the other ſeven compartments, if they may be ſo called, are each of them diſtinguiſhed by two fluted Corinthian pillars, and as many pilaſters of Giallo Antico. The capitals and baſes are of white marble; theſe ſupport a circular entablature. The wall is perpendicular for half the height of the temple; it then ſlopes forward as it deſcends, the circumference gradually diminiſhing, till it terminates in an opening of about twenty-five feet diameter. There are no windows; the central opening in the vault admitting a ſufficiency of light, has a much finer effect than windows could have had. No great inconveniency can happen from this opening. The conical form of the temple prevents the rain from falling near the walls where the altars now are, and where the ſtatues of the Gods were formerly placed. The rain which falls in the middle immediately drills through holes which perforate a large piece of porphyry that forms the centre of the pavement, the whole of which conſiſts of various pieces of marble, agate, and other materials, which have been picked up from the ruins, and now compoſe a ſingular kind of Moſaic work.

The portico was added by Marcus Agrippa, the ſon-in-law of Auguſtus. It is ſupported by ſixteen pillars of granite, five feet in diameter, and of a ſingle piece each. Upon the frieze,

in the front, is the following inſcription in large capitals:

M. AGRIPPA L. F. CONSUL TERTIUM FECIT.

Some are of opinion, that the Pantheon is much more ancient than the Auguſtan age, and that the portico, which is the only part thoſe antiquarians admit to be the work of Agrippa, though beautiful in itſelf, does not correſpond with the ſimplicity of the temple.

As the Pantheon is the moſt entire, the Amphitheatre of Veſpaſian is the moſt ſtupendous, monument of antiquity in Rome. It was finiſhed by his ſon Titus, and obtained the name of Coloſſeum, afterwards corrupted into Coliſeum, from a coloſſal ſtatue of Apollo which was placed before it. This vaſt ſtructure was built of Tiburtine ſtone, which is remarkably durable. If the public buildings of the ancient Romans had met with no more inveterate enemy than Time, we might, at this day, contemplate the greater number in all their original perfection; they were formed for the admiration of much remoter ages than the preſent. This Amphitheatre in particular might have ſtood entire for two thouſand years to come: For what are the ſlow corroſions of time, in compariſon of the rapid deſtruction from the fury of Barbarians, the zeal of Bigots, and the avarice of Popes and Cardinals? The

firſt depredation made on this ſtupendous building, was by the inhabitants of Rome themſelves, at that time greater Goths than their conqueror. We are told, they applied to Theodoric, whoſe court was then at Ravenna, for liberty to take the ſtones of this Amphitheatre for ſome public work they were carrying on. The marble cornices, the friezes, and other ornaments of this building, have been carried away, at various times, to adorn palaces; and the ſtones have been taken to build churches, and ſometimes to repair the walls of Rome, the moſt uſeleſs work of all. For of what importance are walls to a city, without a garriſon, and whoſe moſt powerful artillery affects not the bodies, but only the minds, of men? About one-half of the external circuit ſtill remains, from which, and the ruins of the other parts, a pretty exact idea may be formed of the original ſtructure. By a computation made by Mr. Byres, it could contain eighty-five thouſand ſpectators, making a convenient allowance for each. Fourteen chapels are now erected within ſide, repreſenting the ſtages of our Saviour's paſſion. This expedient of conſecrating them into Chriſtian chapels and churches, has ſaved ſome of the fineſt remains of Heathen magnificence from utter deſtruction.

Our admiration of the Romans is tempered with horror, when we reflect on the uſe formerly made of this immenſe building, and the

dreadful ſcenes which were acted on the Arena; were not only criminals condemned to death, but alſo priſoners taken in war, were obliged to butcher each other, for the entertainment of an inhuman populace. The combats of Gladiators were at firſt uſed in Rome at funerals only, where priſoners were obliged to aſſume that profeſſion, and fight before the tombs of deceaſed Generals or Magiſtrates, in imitation of the barbarous cuſtom of the Greeks, of ſacrificing captives at the tombs of their heroes.

This horrid piece of magnificence, which, at firſt, was exhibited only on the death of Conſuls, and men of the higheſt diſtinction, came gradually to be claimed by every citizen who was ſufficiently rich to defray the expence; and as the people's fondneſs for theſe combats increaſed every day, they were no longer confined to funeral ſolemnities, but became cuſtomary on days of public rejoicing, and were exhibited, at amazing expence, by ſome Generals after victories. In the progreſs of riches, luxury, and vice, it became a profeſſion in Rome to deal in gladiators. Men called Laniſtæ made it their buſineſs to purchaſe priſoners and ſlaves, to have them inſtructed in the uſe of the various weapons; and when any Roman choſe to amuſe the people with their favourite ſhow, or to entertain a ſelect company of his own friends upon any particular occaſion, he applied to the Laniſtæ; who, for a fixed price, furniſhed him

with as many pairs of those unhappy combatants as he required. They had various names given to them, according to the different manner in which they were armed. Towards the end of the republic, some of the rich and powerful citizens had great numbers of gladiators of their own, who were daily exercised by the Lanistæ, and always kept ready for fighting when ordered by their proprietor. Those who were often victorious, or had the good fortune to please their masters, had their liberty granted them, on which they generally quitted their profession; though it sometimes happened, that those who were remarkably skilful, continued it, either from vanity or poverty, even after they had obtained their freedom; and the applause bestowed on those gladiators, had the effect of inducing men born free, to choose this for a profession, which they exercised for money, till age impaired their strength and address. They then hung up their arms in the temple of Hercules, and appeared no more on the Arena.

——— Veianius armis
Herculis ad postem fixis latet abditus agro,
Ne populum extrema toties exoret Arena.

There were many Amphitheatres at Rome, in other towns of Italy, and in many provinces of the empire; but this of Vespasian was the largest that ever was built. That at Verona

is the next in ſize in Italy, and the remains of the Amphitheatre at Nimes, in the ſouth of France, prove, that it was the moſt magnificent ſtructure of this kind in any of the Roman provinces. The Romans were ſo exceſſively fond of theſe exhibitions, that wherever colonies were eſtabliſhed, it was found requiſite to give public ſhews of this kind, to induce the emigrants to remain in their new country: and in the provinces where it was thought neceſſary that a conſiderable body of troops ſhould remain conſtantly, ſtructures of this kind were erected, at vaſt labour and expence, and were found the beſt means of inducing the young officers to ſubmit cheerfully to a long abſence from the capital, and of preventing the common ſoldiers from deſertion. The profuſion of human blood, which was ſhed in the Arena, by the cruel prodigality of the Emperors, and the refinements which were invented to augment the barbarous pleaſure of the ſpectators, are proofs of the dreadful degree of corruption and depravity to which human nature is capable of attaining, even among a learned and enlightened people, when unreſtrained by the mild precepts of a benevolent religion. We are told, that the gladiators bred for the uſe of particular patricians, as well as thoſe kept for hire by the Laniſtæ, were, for ſome weeks before they appeared in the Arena, fed upon ſuch ſucculent diet, as would ſooneſt fill their veins, that they might bleed freely at every wound. They were inſtructed by the Laniſtæ, not only in the

art of fighting, but alſo in the moſt graceful manner of dying; and when thoſe wretched men felt themſelves mortally wounded, they aſſumed ſuch attitudes as they knew pleaſed the beholders; and they ſeemed to receive pleaſure themſelves from the applauſe beſtowed upon them in their laſt moments.

When a gladiator was thrown by his antagoniſt to the ground, and directly laid down his arms, it was a ſign that he could reſiſt no longer, and declared himſelf vanquiſhed; but ſtill his life depended on the ſpectators. If they were pleaſed with his performance, or, in a merciful diſpoſition, they held up their hands, with the thumb folded down, and the life of the man was ſpared; but if they were in the humour to ſee him die, they held up the hand clinched, with the thumb only erect. As ſoon as the proſtrate victim beheld that fatal ſignal, he knew all hopes of life were vain, and immediately preſented his breaſt to the ſword of his adverſary, who, whatever his own inclinations might be, was obliged to put him to death inſtantly.

As theſe combats formed the ſupreme pleaſure of the inhabitants of Rome, the moſt cruel of their Emperors were ſometimes the moſt popular; merely becauſe they gratified the people, without reſtraint, in their favourite amuſement. When Marcus Aurelius thought it

neceſſary, for the public ſervice, to recruit his army from the gladiators of Rome; it raiſed more diſcontent among the populace, than many of the wildeſt pranks of Caligula. In the times of ſome of the Emperors, the lower claſs of Roman citizens were certainly as worthleſs a ſet of men as ever exiſted; ſtained with all the vices which ariſe from idleneſs and dependence; living upon the largeſſes of the great; paſſing their whole time in the Circus and Amphitheatres, where every ſentiment of humanity was annihilated within their breaſts, and where the agonies and torments of their fellow-creatures were their chief paſtime. That no occaſion might be loſt of indulging this ſavage taſte of the populace, criminals were condemned to fight with wild beaſts in the Arena, or were expoſed, unarmed, to be torn in pieces by them; at other times, they were blind-folded, and in that condition obliged to cut and ſlaughter each other. So that, inſtead of victims ſolemnly ſacrificed to public juſtice, they ſeemed to be brought in as buffoons to raiſe the mirth of the ſpectators.

The practice of domeſtic ſlavery had alſo a great influence in rendering the Romans of a cruel and haughty character. Maſters could puniſh their ſlaves in what manner, and to what degree, they thought proper. It was as late as the Emperor Adrian's time, before any law was made, ordaining that a maſter who ſhould

put his ſlave to death without ſufficient cauſe, ſhould be tried for his life. The uſual porter at the gate of a great man's houſe in ancient Rome, was a chained ſlave. The noiſe of whips and laſhes refounded from one houſe to another, at the time when it was cuſtomary for the maſters of families to take an account of the conduct of their ſervants. This cruel diſpoſition, as is the caſe wherever domeſtic ſlavery prevails, extended to the gentle ſex, and hardened the mild tempers of the women. What a picture has Juvenal drawn of the toilet of a Roman lady!

Nam ſi conſtituit, ſolitoque decentius optat
Ornari———
Componit crinem laceratis ipſa capillis,
Nuda humeros Pſecas infelix, nudiſque mamillis.
Altior hic quare cincinnus? Taurea punit.
Continuo flexi crimen facinuſque capilli.

It was cuſtomary for avaricious maſters, to ſend their infirm and ſick ſlaves, to an iſland in the Tiber, where there was a Temple of Æſculapius; if the God pleaſed to recover them, the maſter took them back to his family; if they died, no farther inquiry was made about them. The Emperor Claudius put a check to this piece of inhumanity, by ordaining, that every ſick ſlave, thus abandoned by his maſter, ſhould be declared free when he recovered his health.

From theſe obſervations, are we to infer, that the ancient Romans were *naturally* of a more cruel turn of mind, than the preſent inhabitants of Europe? Or is there not reaſon to believe that, in the ſame circumſtances, modern nations would act in the ſame manner? Do we not perceive, that the practice of domeſtic ſlavery has, at this day, a ſtrong tendency to render men haughty, capricious, and cruel. Such, I am afraid, is the nature of man, that if he has power without controul, he will uſe it without juſtice; abſolute power has a ſtrong tendency to make good men bad, and never fails to make bad men worſe.

It was an obſervation of the late Mareſchal Saxe, that in all the conteſts between the army waggoners and their horſes, the waggoners were in the wrong; which he imputed to their having abſolute authority over the horſes. In the qualities of the head and heart, and in moſt other reſpects, he thought the men and horſes on an equality. Caprice is a vice of the temper, which increaſes faſter than any other by indulgence; it often ſpoils the beſt qualities of the heart, and, in particular ſituations, degenerates into the moſt unſufferable tyranny. The firſt appearance of it in young minds ought to be oppoſed with firmneſs, and prevented from farther progreſs, otherwiſe our future attempts to arreſt it may be fruitleſs; for

Mobilitate viget, viresque acquirit eundo.

The combats in the Amphitheatres were, as I have already ſaid, introduced by degrees at Rome. The cuſtom of making priſoners fight around the funeral piles of deceaſed heroes, was a refinement on a more barbarous practice; and the Romans, no doubt, valued themſelves on their humanity, in not butchering their priſoners in cold blood, as was the cuſtom in the earlieſt ages of Greece. The inſtitution of obliging criminals to fight in the Arena, and thus giving them a chance for their lives, would alſo appear to them a very merciful improvement on the common manner of execution. The groſſeſt ſophiſtry will paſs on men's underſtandings, when it is uſed in ſupport of meaſures to which they are already inclined. And when we conſider the eagerneſs with which the populace of every country behold the accidental combats which occur in the ſtreets, we need not be ſurpriſed to find, that when once the combats of gladiators were permitted among the Roman populace, on whatever pretext, the taſte for them would daily increaſe, till it eraſed every idea of compunction from their breaſts, and became their ruling paſſion. The Patricians, enriched by the pillage of kingdoms, and knowing that their power at Rome, and conſequently all over the world, depended on the favour and ſuffrages of the people, naturally

ſought popularity by gratifying their favourite taſte. Afterwards the Emperors might imagine, that ſuch ſhows would keep the citizens from reflecting on their loſt liberties, or the enormities of the new form of government; and, excluſive of every political reaſon, many of them, from the barbarous diſpoſition of their own minds, would take as much pleaſure in the ſcenes acted on the Arena, as the moſt ſavage of the vulgar.

While we expreſs horror and indignation at the fondneſs which the Romans diſplayed for the bloody combats of the Amphitheatre, let us reflect, whether this proceeded from any peculiar cruelty of diſpoſition inherent in that people, or belongs to mankind in general; let us reflect, whether it is probable, that the people of any other nation would not be gradually led, by the ſame degrees, to an equal paſſion for ſuch horrid entertainments. Let us conſider, whether there is reaſon to ſuſpect that thoſe who arm cocks with ſteel, and take pleaſure in beholding the ſpirited little animals cut one another to death, would not take the ſame, or ſuperior delight, in obliging men to ſlaughter each other if they had the power.—And what reſtrains them? Is there no reaſon to believe, that the influence of a purer religion, and brighter example, than were known to the Heathen world, prevents mankind from thoſe enormities *now*, which were

permitted and countenanced formerly? As soon as the benevolent precepts of Christianity were received by the Romans as the laws of the Deity, the prisoners and the slaves were treated with humanity, and the bloody exhibitions in the Amphitheatres were abolished.

LETTER XL.

Rome.

YOU are ſurpriſed that I have hitherto ſaid nothing of the Capitol, and the Forum Romanum, which is by far the moſt intereſting ſcene of antiquities in Rome. The objects worthy of attention are ſo numerous, and appear ſo confuſed, that it was a conſiderable time before I could form a tolerable diſtinct idea of their ſituation with reſpect to each other, though I have paid many more viſits to this than any other ſpot ſince I have been in this city. Before we entered a church or palace, we ran thither with as much impatience as if the Capitol had been in danger of falling before our arrival. The approach to the modern Campidoglio is very noble, and worthy of the genius of Michael Angelo. The building itſelf is alſo the work of that great artiſt; it is raiſed on part of the ruins of the ancient Capitol, and fronts St. Peter's church, with its back to the Forum and old Rome. Aſcending this celebrated hill, the heart beats quick, and the mind warms with a thouſand intereſting ideas. You are carried back, at once, to the famous robber who firſt founded it. Without thinking of the waſte of time which muſt have

effaced what you are looking for, you caſt about your eyes in ſearch of the path by which the Gauls climbed up, and where they were oppoſed and overthrown by Manlius. You withdraw your eyes, with diſdain, from every modern object, and are even diſpleaſed with the elegant ſtructure you ſee before you, and contemplate, with more reſpect, the ruins on which it is founded; becauſe they are more truly Roman.

The two Sphynxes of baſalte, at the bottom of the aſcent, though excellent ſpecimens of Egyptian ſculpture, engage little of your attention. Warm with the glory of Rome, you cannot beſtow a thought on the hieroglyphics of Egypt. At ſight of the trophies erected in honour of C. Marius, all thoſe bloody ſcenes acted by the fury of party and demon of revenge, during the moſt calamitous period of the republic, ruſh upon the memory; and you regret that Time, who has ſpared the monuments of this fierce ſoldier, has deſtroyed the numerous trophies raiſed to the Fabii, the Scipio's, and other heroes, diſtinguiſhed for the virtues of humanity, as well as the talents of Generals. You are ſtruck with the coloſſal ſtatues of Caſtor and Pollux, and, in the heat of enthuſiaſm, confounding the fictions of poetry with hiſtorical truth, your heart applauds their fraternal affection, and thanks them for the timely aſſiſtance they afforded the Romans in a battle with

the Volſci. You rejoice at their good fortune, which, on earth, has procured them a place in the Capitol, and, in heaven, a ſeat by Hercules. Horace informs us, that Auguſtus drinks his nectar, reclined between them and that demi-god—

Quos inter Auguſtus recumbens
Purpureo bibit ore nectar.

From them you move forward, and your admiration is fixed by the animated equeſtrian ſtatue of Marcus Aurelius, which naturally brings to your memory that happy period, when the Roman empire was governed by a Prince who, during a long reign, made the good of his ſubjects the chief object of his government. You proceed to the upper end of the area; your eye is caught by a majeſtic female figure, in a ſitting attitude; you are told it is a Roma Triumphans; you view her with all the warmth of fond enthuſiaſm, but you recollect that ſhe is no longer Triumphans; you caſt an indignant eye on St. Peter's church, to which ſhe alſo ſeems to look with indignation. Is there ſuch another inſtance of the viciſſitude of human things; the proud Miſtreſs of the World under the dominion of a prieſt? Horace was probably accuſed of vanity when he wrote theſe lines:

——— Uſque ego poſtera
Creſcam laude recens, dum Capitolium
Scandet cum tacita virgine Pontifex.

Yet the poet's works have already outlived this period fourteen hundred years; and Virgil has tranſmitted the memory of the friendſhip and fame of Niſus and Euryalus, the ſame ſpace of time beyond the period which he himſelf, in the ardour of poetic hope, had fixed for its limits.

Fortunati ambo ſi quid mea carmina poſſunt,
Nulla dies unquam memori vos eximet ævo:
Dum domus Æneæ Capitoli immobile ſaxum
Accolet, imperiumque Pater Romanus habebit.

In the two wings of the modern palace, called the Campidoglio, the Conſervators of the city have apartments; their office is analogous to that of the ancient Ædiles. In the main body an Italian nobleman, appointed by the Pope, has his reſidence, with the title of Senator of Rome; the miſerable repreſentation of that Senate which gave laws to the world. The moſt defaced ruin, the moſt ſhapeleſs heap of antique rubbiſh in all Rome, cannot convey a feebler image of the building to which they belonged, than this deputy of the Pope does of that auguſt aſſembly. The beautiful approach to this palace, and all the ornaments which decorate the area before it, cannot detain you long from the back view to which the ancient Capitol fronted. Here you behold the Forum Romanum, now exhibiting a melancholy but intereſting view of the devaſtation wrought by the united force of time, avarice, and bigotry. The firſt objects which

meet your eye, on looking from this ſide of the hill, are three fine pillars, two-thirds of them buried in the ruins of the old Capitol. They are ſaid to be the remains of the temple of Jupiter Tonans, built by Auguſtus, in gratitude for having narrowly eſcaped death from a ſtroke of lightning. Near theſe are the remains of Jupiter Stator, conſiſting of three very elegant ſmall Corinthian pillars, with their entablature; the Temple of Concord, where Cicero aſſembled the Senate, on the diſcovery of Catiline's conſpiracy; the Temple of Romulus and Remus, and that of Antoninus and Fauſtina, juſt by it, both converted into modern churches; the ruins of the magnificent Temple of Peace, built immediately after the taking of Jeruſalem, the Roman empire being then in profound peace. This is ſaid to have been the fineſt temple in old Rome; part of the materials of Nero's Golden Houſe, which Veſpaſian pulled down, were uſed in erecting this grand edifice. The only entire pillar remaining of this temple, was placed by Paul V. before the church of Santa Maria Maggiore. It is a moſt beautiful fluted Corinthian column, and gives a very high idea of the temple to which it originally belonged. His Holineſs has crowned it with an image of the Virgin Mary; and, in the inſcription on the pedeſtal, he gives his reaſon for chooſing a column belonging to the Temple of Peace, as an ornament to a church dedicated to the Virgin.

Ex cujus viſceribus Princeps veræ Pacis genitus eſt.

Of many triumphal arches which ſtood formerly in Rome, there are only three now remaining, all of them near the Capitol, and forming entries to the Forum; thoſe of Titus, Septimius Severus, and Conſtantine. The laſt is by much the fineſt of the three; but its chief beauties are not genuine, nor, properly ſpeaking, its own; they conſiſt of ſome admirable baſſo relievos, ſtolen from the Forum of Trajan, and repreſenting that Emperor's victories over the Dacians. This theft might, perhaps, not have been ſo notorious to poſterity, if the artiſts of Conſtantine's time had not added ſome figures, which make the fraud apparent, and, by their great inferiority, evince the degeneracy of the arts in the interval between the reigns of theſe two Emperors.

The relievos of the arch of Titus repreſent the table of ſhew-bread, the trumpets, the golden candleſticks with ſeven branches, and other utenſils, brought from the Temple of Jeruſalem. The quarter which is allotted for the Jews is not at a great diſtance from this arch. There are about nine thouſand of that unfortunate nation at preſent in Rome; the lineal deſcendants of thoſe brought captive, by Titus, from Jeruſalem. I have been aſſured that they always cautiouſly avoid paſſing through this arch,

though it lies directly in their way to the Campo Vaccino, chooſing rather to make a circuit, and enter the Forum at another place. I was affected at hearing this inſtance of ſenſibility in a people who, whatever other faults they may have, are certainly not deficient in patriotiſm, and attachment to the religion and cuſtoms of their forefathers. The ſame delicacy of ſentiment is diſplayed by a poet of their own country, in the 137th pſalm, as it is finely tranſlated by Buchanan:

Dum procul a Patria mœſti Babylonis in oris,
Fluminis ad liquidas forte ſedemus aquas;
Illa animum ſubiit ſpecies miſeranda Sionis,
Et nunquam Patrii tecta videnda ſoli.

* * * * * *

O Solymæ, O adyta, et ſacri penetralia templi
Ullane vos animo deleat hora meo? &c.

You may read the whole; you will perhaps find ſome poetical beauties which eſcaped your obſervation when you heard it ſung in churches; but the poet's ardour ſeems to glow too violently towards the end of the pſalm.

LETTER XLI.

Rome.

THERE are many other intereſting ruins in and about the Campo Vaccino, beſides thoſe I have mentioned; but of ſome ſtructures which we know formerly ſtood here, no veſtige is now to be ſeen. This is the caſe with the arch which was erected in honour of the Fabian family. There is the ſtrongeſt reaſon to believe, that the ancient Forum was entirely ſurrounded with temples, baſilicæ, and public buildings of various kinds, and adorned with porticoes and colonades. In the time of the Republic, aſſemblies of the people were held there, laws were propoſed, and juſtice adminiſtered. In it was the Roſtrum, from whence the orators harangued the people. All who aſpired at dignities came hither to canvaſs ſuffrages. The Bankers had their offices near the Forum, as well as thoſe who received the revenues of the Commonwealth; and all kind of buſineſs was tranſacted in this place. In my viſits to the Campo Vaccino, I arrange the ancient Forum in the beſt manner I can, and fix on the particular ſpot where each edifice ſtood. In this I am ſometimes a little cramped in room; for the ſpace between the Palatine Hill and the Capitol is ſo ſmall, and I am ſo circumſcribed

by arches and temples, whoſe ruins ſtill remain, that I find it impoſſible to make the Forum Romanum larger than Covent Garden. I looked about for the Via Sacra, where Horace met with his troubleſome companion. Some people imagine, this was no other than the Forum itſelf; but I am clearly of opinion, that the Via Sacra was a ſtreet leading to the Forum, and loſt in it, as a ſtreet in London terminates at a ſquare. I have, at laſt, fixed on the exact point where it joins the Forum, which is very near the Meta Sudans. If we ſhould ever meet here, I ſhall convince you by local arguments, that I am in the right; but I fear it would be very tedious, and not at all convincing, to tranſmit them to you in writing.

As Rome increaſed in ſize and number of inhabitants, one Forum was found too ſmall, and many others were erected in proceſs of time; but when we ſpeak of the Forum, without any diſtinguiſhing epithet, the ancient one is underſtood.

The Tarpeian Rock is a continuation of that on which the Capitol was built; I went to that part from which criminals condemned to death were thrown. Mr. Byres has meaſured the height; it is exactly fifty-eight feet perpendicular; and he thinks the ground at the bottom, from evident marks, is twenty feet higher than it was originally; ſo that, before this

accumulation of rubbiſh, the precipice muſt have been about eighty feet perpendicular. In reading the hiſtory of the Romans, the vaſt idea we form of that people, naturally extends to the city of Rome, the hills on which it was built, and every thing belonging to it. We image to ourſelves the Tarpeian rock as a tremendous precipice; and, if afterwards we ever have an opportunity of actually ſeeing it, the height falls ſo ſhort of our expectations, that we are apt to think it a great deal leſs than it is in reality. A miſtake of this kind, joined to a careleſs view of the place, which is not in itſelf very intereſting, has led Biſhop Burnet into the ſtrange aſſertion, that the Tarpeian rock is ſo very low, that a man would think it no great matter to leap down it for his diverſion. Criminals thrown from this precipice, were literally thrown out of the city of old Rome into the Campus Martius, which was a large plain, of a triangular ſhape; two ſides of the triangle being formed by the Tiber, and the baſe by the Capitol, and buildings extending three miles nearly in a parallel line with it. The Campus Martius had its name from a ſmall temple built in it, at a very early period, and dedicated to Mars; or it might have this name from the military exerciſes performed there. In this field, the great aſſemblies of the people, called Cenſus or Luſtrum, were held every fifth year; the Conſuls, Cenſors, and Tribunes, were elected; the levies of troops were made; and there the Roman youth exerciſed

themſelves in riding, driving the chariot, ſhooting with the bow, uſing the ſling, darting the javelin, throwing the diſcus or quoit, in wreſtling, running; and when covered with ſweat and duſt, in conſequence of theſe exerciſes, they waſhed their bodies clean by ſwimming in the Tiber. Horace accuſes Lydia of ruining a young man, by keeping him from thoſe manly exerciſes in which he formerly excelled.

——Cur apricum
Oderit campum, patiens pulveris atque ſolis:
Cur neque militaris
Inter æquales equitet, Gallica nec lupatis
Temperet ora frænis?
Cur timet flavum Tiberim tangere?

The dead bodies of the moſt illuſtrious citizens were alſo burnt in this field, which was adorned gradually by ſtatues and trophies, erected to the memory of diſtinguiſhed men. But every feature of its ancient appearance, is now hid by the ſtreets and buildings of modern Rome.

The inhabitants of Rome may be excuſed for chuſing this ſituation for their houſes, though by ſo doing, they have deprived us of a view of the Campus Martius. But ſurely they, or their Governors, ought to ſhow more ſolicitude for preſerving the antiquities than they do; and they might, without inconveniency, find ſome place for a Cow Market, of leſs importance than the

ancient Forum. It is not in their power to reſtore it to its former ſplendor, but they might, at leaſt, have prevented its falling back to the ſtate in which Æneas found it, when he came to viſit the poor Evander.

Talibus inter ſe dictis ad tecta ſubibant
Pauperis Evandri: paſſimque armenta videbant
Romanoque Foro et lautis mugire carinis.

I have already ſaid, that beſides this, there were ſeveral Forums in Rome, where Baſilicæ were built, juſtice adminiſtered, and buſineſs tranſacted. The Emperors were fond of having ſuch public places named after them. The accounts we have of the Forums of Nerva, and that of Trajan, give the higheſt idea of their grandeur and elegance; three Corinthian pillars, with their entablature, are all that remain of the former; of the latter, the noble column placed in the middle, ſtill preſerves all its original beauty. It conſiſts of twenty-three circular pieces of white marble, horizontally placed one above the other; it is about twelve feet diameter at the bottom, and ten at the top. The plinth of the baſe is a piece of marble twenty-one feet ſquare. A ſtaircaſe, conſiſting of one hundred and eighty-three ſteps, and ſufficiently wide to admit a man to aſcend, is cut out of the ſolid marble, leaving a ſmall pillar in the middle, round which the ſtair winds from the bottom to the top. I obſerved a piece broken, as I

went up, which ſhewed that thoſe large maſſes of marble have been exquiſitely poliſhed on the flat ſides, where they are in contact with each other, that the adheſion and ſtrength of the pillar might be the greater. The ſtairs are lighted by forty-one windows, exceedingly narrow on the outſide, that they might not interrupt the connection of the baſſo relievos, but which gradually widen within, and by that means give ſufficient light. The baſe of the column is ornamented with baſſo relievos, repreſenting trophies of Dacian armour. The moſt memorable events of Trajan's expedition againſt the Dacians, are admirably wrought in a continued ſpiral line from the bottom of the column to the top. The figures towards the top, are too far removed from the eye to be ſeen perfectly. To have rendered them equally viſible with thoſe below, it would have been neceſſary to have made them larger proportionably as they aſcended. Viewed from any conſiderable diſtance, all the ſculpture is loſt, and a plain fluted pillar, of the ſame proportions, would have had as fine an effect. But ſuch a frugal plan would not have been ſo glorious to the Prince, whoſe victories are engraven, or ſo intereſting to the legionary ſoldiers, many of whom, no doubt, are here perſonally repreſented. Beſides, it would not now be near ſo valuable a monument, in the eyes of antiquarians, or ſo uſeful a ſtudy to ſculptors and painters, who have occaſion to repreſent the military dreſs

of the Romans, or the coſtume of the Eaſt in that age. Excluſive of the ſtatue, this beautiful pillar is a hundred and twenty feet high. The aſhes of Trajan were depoſited in an urn at the bottom, and his ſtatue at the top. Pope Sixtus the Fifth, in the room of the Emperor's, has placed a ſtatue of St. Peter upon this column. I obſerved to a gentleman, with whom I viſited this pillar, that I thought there was not much propriety in placing the figure of St. Peter upon a monument, repreſenting the victories, and erected in honour of the Emperor Trajan. "There is ſome propriety, however," replied he coldly, "in having made the ſtatue of *braſs*."

LETTER XLII.

Rome.

I HAVE been witneſs to the beatification of a Saint; he was of the order of St. Francis, and a great many brethren of that order were preſent, and in very high ſpirits on the occaſion. There are a greater number of eccleſiaſtics beatified, and canonized, than any other order of men. In the firſt place, becauſe, no doubt, they deſerve it better; and alſo, becauſe they are more ſolicitous to have Saints taken from among men of their own profeſſion, and particular order, than people in other ſituations in life are. Every monk imagines, it reflects perſonal honour on himſelf, when one of his order is canoniſed. Soldiers, lawyers, and phyſicians, would probably be happy to ſee ſome of their brethren diſtinguiſhed in the ſame manner; that they have not had this gratification of late years, may be imputed to the difficulty of finding ſuitable characters among them. Ancient hiſtory, indeed, makes mention of ſome commanders of armies who were very great ſaints; but I have heard of no phyſician who acquired that title ſince the days of St. Luke; or of a ſingle lawyer, of any age or country.

A picture of the preſent Expectant, a great deal larger than life, had been hung up on the front of St. Peter's church, ſeveral days before the beatification took place. This ceremony was alſo announced by printed papers, diſtributed by the happy brethren of St. Francis. On the day of the ſolemnity, his Holineſs, a conſiderable number of Cardinals, many other eccleſiaſtics, all the Capucin Friars in Rome, and a great concourſe of ſpectators attended. The ceremony was performed in St. Peter's church. An eccleſiaſtic of my acquaintance procured us a very convenient place for ſeeing the whole. The ceremony of beatification is a previous ſtep to that of canonization. The Saint, after he is beatified, is entitled to more diſtinction in Heaven than before; but he has not the power of freeing ſouls from purgatory till he has been canonized; and therefore is not addreſſed in prayer till he has obtained the ſecond honour. On the preſent occaſion, a long diſcourſe was pronounced by a Franciſcan Friar, ſetting forth the holy life which this Expectant had led upon earth, his devotions, his voluntary penances, and his charitable actions; and a particular enumeration was made, of certain miracles he had performed when alive, and others which had been performed after his death by his bones. The moſt remarkable miracle, by himſelf in perſon, was, his repleniſhing a lady's cupboard with bread, after her houſekeeper, at the Saint's

inſtigation, had given all the bread of the family to the poor.

This buſineſs is carried on in the manner of a law-ſuit. The Devil is ſuppoſed to have an intereſt in preventing men from being made Saints. That all juſtice may be done, and that Satan may have his due, an advocate is employed to plead againſt the pretenſions of the Saint Expectant, and the perſon thus employed is denominated by the people, the Devil's Advocate. He calls in queſtion the miracles ſaid to have been wrought by the Saint and his bones, and raiſes as many objections to the proofs brought of the purity of his life and converſation as he can. It is the buſineſs of the Advocate on the other ſide, to obviate and refute theſe cavils. The controverſy was carried on in Latin. It drew out to a great length, and was by no means amuſing. Your friend Mr. R——y, who ſat near me, loſing patience, from the length of the ceremony, and ſome twitches of the gout, which he felt at that moment, whiſpered me, "I wiſh, from my heart, the devil's advocate "were with his client, and this everlaſting "Saint fairly in Heaven, that we might get "away." The whole party, of which I made one, were ſeized with frequent and long-continued yawnings, which I imagine was obſerved by ſome of the Cardinals, who ſat oppoſite to us. They caught the infection, and although they endeavoured to conceal their gaping under

their purple robes, yet it ſeemed to ſpread and communicate itſelf gradually over the whole aſſembly, the Franciſcan Friars excepted; they were too deeply intereſted in the iſſue of the diſpute, to think it tedious. As often as the Devil's Advocate ſtated an objection, evident ſigns of impatience, contempt, ſurpriſe, indignation, and reſentment appeared in the countenances of the venerable brotherhood, according to their different characters and tempers. One ſhook his head, and whiſpered his neighbour; another raiſed his chin, and puſhed up his underlip with a diſdainful ſmile; a third ſtarted, opened his eye-lids as wide as he could, and held up both his hands, with his fingers extended; a fourth raiſed his thumb to his mouth, bit the nail with a grin, and jerked the thumb from his teeth towards the adverſary; a fifth ſtared, in a moſt expreſſive manner, at the Pope, and then fix ed his eyes, frowning, on the Advocate. All were in agitation, till the Saint's Counſel began to ſpeak, when a profound ſilence took place, and the moment he had made his anſwer, their countenances brightened, a ſmile of ſatisfaction ſpread around, and they nodded and ſhook their beards at each other with mutual congratulations. In the mean time, the Cardinals, and the other auditors, who were not aſleep, continued yawning; for my own part, I was kept awake only by the interlude of grimaces, played off by the Capucins between the arguments. Excluſive of theſe, the making

a Saint of a Capucin, is the dulleſt buſineſs I ever was witneſs to. I hope the man himſelf enjoys much felicity ſince the ceremony, in which caſe no good-natured perſon will grudge the tedium and fatigue which he ſuffered on the occaſion. I ought to have told you, that the Advocate's reaſoning was all in vain; the Devil loſt his cauſe, without the poſſibility of appeal. The Saint's claim being confirmed, he was admitted into all the privileges of beatification; the Convent defraying the expence of the proceſs.

As we returned, Mr. R——y aſked, if I recollected the Saint's name. I ſaid, I did not. "We muſt inform ourſelves," ſaid he; "for "when I meet him above, I ſhall certainly claim "ſome merit with him, from having done pe-"nance at his beatification*."

* I have been ſince informed, this new Saint is called St. Buonavantura; he was by birth a Neapolitan.

LETTER XLIII.

Rome.

TRAVELLERS are too apt to form haſty, and, for the moſt part, unfavourable opinions of national characters. Finding the cuſtoms and ſentiments of the inhabitants of the foreign countries through which they paſs, very different from their own, they are ready to conſider them as erroneous, and conclude, that thoſe who act and think in a manner ſo oppoſite to themſelves, muſt be either knaves, fools, or both. In ſuch haſty deciſions they are often confirmed by the partial repreſentations of a few of their own countrymen, or of other foreigners who are eſtabliſhed in ſome profeſſion in thoſe countries, and who have an intereſt in giving bad impreſſions of the people among whom they reſide.

That the Italians have an uncommon ſhare of natural ſagacity and acuteneſs, is pretty generally allowed; but they are accuſed of being deceitful, perfidious, and revengeful; and the frequent aſſaſſinations and murders which happen in the ſtreets of the great towns in Italy, are brought as proofs of this charge. I have not remained a ſufficient length of time in Italy,

ſuppoſing I were, in all other reſpects, qualified to decide on the character of the inhabitants; but from the opportunities I have had, my idea of the Italians is, that they are an ingenious ſober people, with quick feelings, and therefore irritable; but when unprovoked, of a mild and obliging diſpoſition, and leſs ſubject to avarice, envy, or repining at the narrowneſs of their own circumſtances, and the comparative wealth of others, than moſt other nations. The murders which occaſionally happen, proceed from a deplorable want of police, and ſome very impolitic cuſtoms, which have, from various cauſes, crept among them, and would produce more frequent examples of the ſame kind, if they prevailed to the ſame degree, in ſome other countries. I beg you will keep in your mind, that the aſſaſſinations which diſgrace Italy, whatever may have been the caſe formerly, are now entirely confined to the accidental ſquabbles which occur among the rabble. No ſuch thing has been known for many years paſt among people of condition, or the middle rank of citizens; and with regard to the ſtabbings which happen among the vulgar, they almoſt always proceed from an immediate impulſe of wrath, and are ſeldom the effect of previous malice, or a premeditated plan of revenge. I do not know whether the ſtories we have of mercenary bravos, men who formerly are ſuppoſed to have made it their profeſſion to aſſaſſinate, and live by the murders they committed, are founded in truth;

but I am certain, that at preſent there is no ſuch trade in this country. That the horrid practice of drawing the knife and ſtabbing each other, ſtill ſubſiſts among the Italian vulgar, I am perſuaded, is owing to the ſcandalous impunity with which it is treated. The aſylum which churches and convents offer to criminals, operates againſt the peace of ſociety, and tends to the encouragement of this ſhocking cuſtom in two different manners: Firſt, it encreaſes the criminal's hopes of eſcaping; ſecondly, it diminiſhes, in vulgar minds, the idea of the atrocity of the crime. When the populace ſee a murderer lodged within the ſacred walls of a church, protected and fed by men who are revered on account of their profeſſion, and the ſuppoſed ſanctity of their lives; muſt not this weaken the horror which mankind naturally have for ſuch a crime, and which it ought to be the aim of every government to augment?

Thoſe who are willing to admit that this laſt conſideration may have the effect I have aſcribed to it, on the minds of the vulgar, ſtill contend, that the hopes of impunity can have little influence in keeping up the practice of ſtabbing; becauſe, as has been already obſerved, theſe ſtabbings are always in conſequence of accidental quarrels and ſudden burſts of paſſion, in which men have no conſideration about their future ſafety. All I have to ſay in anſwer is, that if the obſervations I have been able to make on the

human character are well founded, there are certain conſiderations which never entirely loſe their influence on the minds of men, even when they are in the height of paſſion. I do not mean that there are not inſtances of men being thrown into ſuch paroxyſms of fury, as totally deprive them of reflection, and make them act like madmen, without any regard to conſequences; but extraordinary inſtances, which depend on peculiarities of conſtitution, and very ſingular circumſtances, cannot deſtroy the force of an obſervation which, generally ſpeaking, is found juſt. We every day ſee men, who have the character of being of the moſt ungovernable tempers, who are apt to fly into violent fits of paſſion upon the moſt trivial occaſions, yet, in the midſt of all their rage, and when they ſeem to be entirely blinded by fury, are ſtill capable of making diſtinctions; which plainly evince, that they are not ſo very much blinded by anger, as they would ſeem to be. When people are ſubject to violent fits of choler, and to an unreſtrained licence of words and actions, only in the company of thoſe who, from their unfortunate ſituation in life, are obliged to bear ſuch abuſe, it is a plain proof that conſiderations which regard their own perſonal ſafety, have ſome influence on their minds in the midſt of their fury, and inſtruct them to be mad *certo ratione modoque*. This is frequently unknown to thoſe choleric people themſelves, while it is fully evident to every perſon of obſervation around

them. What violent fits of paſſion do ſome men indulge themſelves in againſt their ſlaves and ſervants, which they always impute to the ungovernable nature of their own tempers, of which, however, they diſplay the moſt perfect command upon much greater provocations given by their ſuperiors, equals, or by any ſet of people who are not obliged to bear their ill humour. How often do we ſee men who are agreeable, cheerful, polite, and good-tempered to the world in general, gloomy, peeviſh, and paſſionate, to their wives and children? When you happen to be a witneſs to any inſtance of unprovoked domeſtic rage, into which they have allowed themſelves to be tranſported, they will very probably lament their misfortune, in having more ungovernable tempers than the reſt of mankind. But if a man does not ſpeak and act with the ſame degree of violence on an equal provocation, without conſidering whether it comes from *ſuperior*, *equal*, or *dependant*, he plainly ſhews that he can govern his temper, and that his not doing it on particular occaſions, proceeds from the baſeſt and moſt deſpicable of all motives.

I remember, when I was on the continent with the Engliſh army, having ſeen an officer beat a ſoldier very unmercifully with his cane: I was then ſtanding with ſome officers, all of whom ſeemed to be filled with indignation at this mean exerciſe of power. When the perſon

who had performed the intrepid exploit came to join the circle, he plainly perceived marks of diſapprobation in every countenance; for which reaſon he thought it neceſſary to apologize for what he had done. "Nothing," ſays he, "pro-"vokes me ſo much as a fellow's looking ſau-"cily when I ſpeak to him. I have told that "man ſo fifty times; and yet, on my repri-"manding him juſt now, for having one of the "buttons of his waiſtcoat broken, he *looked* "*saucily* full in my face; which threw me into "ſuch a paſſion, that I could not help threſhing "him.—However, I am ſorry for it, becauſe he "has the character of being an honeſt man, and "has always done his duty, as a ſoldier, very "well. How much," continued he, "are "thoſe people to be envied, who have a full "command of their tempers!"

"No man can command it more perfectly "than yourſelf," ſaid a gentleman who was then in the foot-guards, and has ſince been a general officer.

"I often endeavour to do it," replied the choleric man, "but always find it out of my "power. I have not philoſophy enough to "check the violence of my temper when once I "am provoked."

"You certainly do yourſelf injuſtice, Sir," ſaid the officer; "no perſon ſeems to have their

"paſſions under better diſcipline. With your "brother officers, I never ſaw you, in a ſingle "inſtance, break through the rules of decorum, "or allow your anger to overcome your polite-"neſs to them."

"They never provoked me," ſaid the paſſionate man.

"Provoked you!" rejoined the other; "yes, "Sir, often, and in a much greater degree than "the poor ſoldier. Do not I, at this moment, "give you ten thouſand times more provocation "than he, or any of the unfortunate men under "your command, whom you are ſo apt to beat "and abuſe, ever did?—and yet you ſeem per-"fectly maſter of your temper."

There was no way left by which the choleric man could prove the contrary, except by knocking the other down; but that was a method of convincing his antagoniſt which he did not think proper to uſe. A more intrepid man, in the ſame predicament, would very probably have had recourſe to that expedient; but in general mankind are able, even in the violence of paſſion, to eſtimate, in ſome meaſure, the riſk they run; and the populace of every country are more readily kindled to that *inferior* degree of rage, which makes them loſe their horror for the crime of murder, and diſregard the life of a fellow-creature, than to that *higher* pitch, which

deprives them of all conſideration for their own perſonal ſafety.

In England, Germany, or France, a man knows, that if he commits a murder, every perſon around him will, from that inſtant, become his enemy, and uſe every means to ſeize him, and bring him to juſtice. He knows that he will be immediately carried to priſon, and put to an ignominious death, amidſt the execrations of his countrymen. Impreſſed with theſe ſentiments, and with the natural horror for murder which ſuch ſentiments augment, the populace of thoſe countries hardly ever have recourſe to ſtabbing in their accidental quarrels, however they may be inflamed with anger and rage. The loweſt blackguard in the ſtreets of London will not draw a knife againſt an antagoniſt far ſuperior to himſelf in ſtrength. He will fight him fairly with his fiſts as long as he can, and bear the ſevereſt drubbing, rather than uſe a means of defence which is held in deteſtation by his countrymen, and which would bring himſelf to the gallows.

The murders committed in Germany, France, or England, are therefore comparatively few in number, and happen generally in conſequence of a pre-concerted plan, in which the murderers have taken meaſures for their eſcape or concealment, without which they know that inevitable death awaits them. In Italy the

caſe is different; an Italian is not under the influence of ſo ſtrong an impreſſion, that certain execution muſt be the conſequence of his committing a murder; he is at leſs pains to reſtrain the wrath which he feels kindling within his breaſt; he allows his rage full ſcope; and, if hard preſſed by the ſuperior ſtrength of an enemy, he does not ſcruple to extricate himſelf by a thruſt of his knife; he knows, that if ſome of the Sbirri are not preſent, no other perſon will ſeize him; for *that* office is held in ſuch deteſtation by the Italian populace, that none of them will perform any part of its functions. The murderer is therefore pretty certain of gaining ſome church or convent, where he will be protected, till he can compound the matter with the relations of the deceaſed, or eſcape to ſome of the other Italian States; which is no very difficult matter, as the dominions of none are very extenſive.

Beſides, when any of theſe aſſaſſins has not had the good fortune to get within the portico of a church before he is ſeized by the Sbirri, and when he is actually carried to priſon, it is not a very difficult matter for his friends or relations to prevail, by their entreaties and tears, on ſome of the Cardinals or Princes, to interfere in his favour, and endeavour to obtain his pardon. If this is the caſe, and I am aſſured from authority which fully convinces me, that it is, we need be no longer ſurpriſed that murder

is more common among the Italian populace than among the common people of any other country. As ſoon as aſylums for ſuch criminals are aboliſhed, and juſtice is allowed to take its natural courſe, that foul ſtain will be entirely effaced from the national character of the modern Italians. This is already verified in the Grand Duke of Tuſcany's dominions. The ſame edict which declared that churches and convents ſhould no longer be places of refuge for murderers, has totally put a ſtop to the uſe of the ſtiletto; and the Florentine populace now fight with the ſame blunt weapons that are uſed by the common people of other nations.

I am afraid you will think I have been a little prolix on this occaſion; but I had two objects in view, and was ſolicitous about both. The firſt was to ſhew, that the treacherous and perfidious diſpoſition imputed to the Italians is, like moſt other national reflections, ill founded; and that the facts brought in proof of the accuſation, proceed from other cauſes: the ſecond was, to demonſtrate to certain choleric gentlemen, who pretend to have ungovernable tempers, as an excuſe for rendering every creature dependent on them miſerable, that in their furious fits they not only behave ridiculouſly, but baſely. In civil life, in England, they have the power of only making themſelves contemptible; but in the army or navy, or in our iſlands, they often render themſelves the objects of horror.

LETTER XLIV.

Rome.

THEFTS and crimes which are not capital are puniſhed at Rome, and ſome other towns of Italy, by impriſonment, or by what is called the Cord. This laſt is performed in the ſtreet. The culprit's hands are bound behind by a cord, which runs on a pully; he is then drawn up twenty or thirty feet from the ground, and, if lenity is intended, he is let down ſmoothly in the ſame manner he was drawn up. In this operation the whole weight of the criminal's body is ſuſtained by his hands, and a ſtrong man can bear the puniſhment inflicted in this manner, without future inconveniency; for the ſtrength of the muſcles of his arms enables him to keep his hands preſſed on the middle of his back, and his body hangs in a kind of horizontal poſition. But when they intend to be ſevere, the criminal is allowed to fall from the greateſt height to which he had been raiſed, and the fall is abruptly checked in the middle; by which means the hands and arms are immediately pulled above the head, both ſhoulders are diſlocated, and the body ſwings, powerleſs, in a perpendicular line. It is a cruel and injudicious puniſhment, and left

too much in the power of thoſe who ſuperintend the execution, to make it ſevere or not, as they are inclined.

Breaking on the wheel is never uſed in Rome for any crime; but they ſometimes put in practice another mode of execution, which is much more ſhocking in appearance than cruel in reality. The criminal being ſeated on a ſcaffold, the executioner, who ſtands behind, ſtrikes him on the head with a hammer of a particular conſtruction, which deprives him, at once, of all ſenſation. When it is certain that he is completely dead, the executioner, with a large knife, cuts his throat from ear to ear. This laſt part of the ceremony is thought to make a ſtronger impreſſion on the minds of the ſpectators, than the bloodleſs blow which deprives the criminal of life. Whether the advantages reſulting from this are ſufficient to compenſate for ſhocking the eye with ſuch abominable ſights, I very much queſtion.

Executions are not frequent at Rome, for the reaſons already given: there has been only one ſince our arrival; and thoſe who are of the moſt forgiving diſpoſition will acknowledge, that this criminal was not put to death till the meaſure of his iniquity was ſufficiently full; he was condemned to be hanged for his fifth murder. I ſhall give you ſome account of his execution, and the ceremonies which accompanied

it, becauſe they throw ſome light on the ſentiments and character of the people.

Firſt of all, there was a proceſſion of prieſts, one of whom carried a crucifix on a pole hung with black; they were followed by a number of people in long gowns which covered them from head to foot, with holes immediately before the face, through which thoſe in this diſguiſe could ſee every thing perfectly, while they could not be recognized by the ſpectators. They are of the Company della Miſericordia, which is a ſociety of perſons who, from motives of piety, think it a duty to viſit criminals under ſentence of death, endeavour to bring them to a proper ſenſe of their guilt, aſſiſt them in making the beſt uſe of the ſhort time they have to live, and who never forſake them till the moment of their execution. People of the firſt rank are of this ſociety, and devoutly perform the moſt laborious functions of it. All of them carried lighted torches, and a few ſhook tin boxes, into which the multitude put money to defray the expence of maſſes for the ſoul of the criminal. This is conſidered by many as the moſt meritorious kind of charity; and ſome, whoſe circumſtances do not permit them to beſtow much, confine all the expence they can afford in charity, to the ſingle article of purchaſing maſſes to be ſaid in behalf of thoſe who have died without leaving a *farthing to ſave their ſouls*. The rich, ſay they, who have much ſuperfluous

wealth, may throw away part of it in acts of *temporal* charity; but it is, in a more particular manner, the duty of thoſe who have little to give, to take care that this little ſhall be applied to the moſt beneficial purpoſes. What is the relieving a few poor families from the frivolous diſtreſſes of cold and hunger, in compariſon of freeing them from many years burning in fire and brimſtone? People are reminded of this eſſential kind of charity, not only by the preachers, but alſo by inſcriptions upon the walls of particular churches and convents; and ſometimes the aid of the pencil is called in to awaken the compunction of the unfeeling and hard-hearted. On the external walls of ſome convents, immediately above the box into which you are directed to put your money, views of purgatory are painted in the moſt flaming colours, where people are ſeen in all the agonies of burning, raiſing their indignant eyes to thoſe unmindful relations and acquaintances, who, rather than part with a little money, allow them to remain in thoſe abodes of torment. One can hardly conceive how any mortal can paſs ſuch a picture without emptying his purſe into the box, if, by ſo doing, he believed he could redeem, I will not ſay a human creature, but even a poor incorrigible dog, or vicious horſe, from ſuch a dreadful ſituation. As the Italians in general ſeem to have more ſenſibility than any people I am acquainted with, and as I ſee ſome, who cannot be ſuppoſed totally in want of money, paſs

by thoſe pictures every day without putting a farthing into the box, I muſt impute this ſtinginess to a lack of faith rather than of ſenſibility. Such unmindful paſſengers are probably of the number of thoſe who begin to ſuſpect that the money of the living can be of little uſe to the dead. Being abſolutely certain that it gives themſelves much pain to part with it in this world, and doubtful whether it will have any efficacy in abridging the pains of their friends in the other, they heſitate for ſome time between the two riſks, that of loſing their own money, and that of allowing their neighbour's ſoul to continue in torture; and it would appear that thoſe ſceptics generally decide the diſpute in favour of the money.

But in ſuch a caſe as that which I have been deſcribing, where a poor wretch is juſt going to be thruſt by violence out of one world, and ſolicits a little money to ſecure him a tolerable reception in another, the paſſions of the ſpectators are too much agitated for cold reaſoning, and the moſt niggardly ſceptic throws his mite into the boxes of the Compagnia della Miſericordia. Immediately after them came the malefactor himſelf, ſeated in a cart, with a Capucin Friar on each ſide of him. The hangman, with two aſſiſtants, dreſſed in ſcarlet jackets, walked by the cart. This proceſſion having moved ſlowly round the gallows, which was erected in the Piazza del Populo, the culprit deſcended

from the cart, and was led to a houſe in the neighbourhood, attended by the two Capucins. He remained there about half an hour, was confeſſed and received abſolution; after which he came out, exclaiming to the populace to join in prayers for his ſoul, and walked with a hurried pace to the gallows, the hangman and his aſſiſtants having hold of his arms, they ſupported him up the ladder, the unhappy man repeating prayers as faſt as he could utter till he was turned off. He was not left a moment to himſelf. The executioner ſtepped from the ladder, and ſtood with a foot on each of his ſhoulders, ſupporting himſelf in that ſituation with his hands on the top of the gallows, the aſſiſtants at the ſame time pulling down the malefactor's legs, ſo that he muſt have died in an inſtant. The executioner, in a ſhort time, ſlid to the ground along the dead body, as a ſailor ſlides on a rope. They then removed the cloth which covered his face, and twirled the body round with great rapidity, as if their intention had been to divert the mob; who, however, did not ſhew any diſpoſition to be amuſed in that manner. The multitude beheld the ſcene with ſilent awe and compaſſion. During the time appointed by law for the body to hang, all the members of the proceſſion, with the whole apparatus of torches, crucifixes, and Capucins, went into a neighbouring church, at the corner of the Strada del Babbuino, and remained there till a maſs was ſaid for the ſoul of the deceaſed; and when that was

concluded, they returned in proceſſion to the gallows, with a coffin covered with black cloth. On their approach, the executioner, with his aſſiſtants, haſtily retired among the crowd, and were no more allowed to come near the body. The condemned perſon having now paid the forfeit due to his crimes, was no longer conſidered as an object of hatred: his dead body was therefore reſcued from the contaminating touch of thoſe who are held by the populace in the greateſt abhorrence. Two perſons in maſks, and with black gowns, mounted the ladder and cut the rope, while others below, of the ſame ſociety, received the body, and put it carefully into the coffin. An old woman then ſaid with an exalted voice, "Adeſſo ſpero che l'anima ſua "ſia in paradiſo;" "Now I hope his ſoul is in "heaven;" and the multitude around ſeemed all inclined to hope the ſame.

The ſerious and compaſſionate manner in which the Roman populace beheld this execution, forms a preſumption of the gentleneſs of their diſpoſitions. The crimes of which this man had been guilty muſt naturally have raiſed their indignation, and his profeſſion had a tendency to increaſe and keep it up; for he was one of the Sbirri, all of whom are held in the moſt perfect deteſtation by the common people; yet the moment they ſaw this object of their hatred in the character of a poor condemned man, about to ſuffer for his crimes, all their

animoſity ceaſed; no rancour was diſplayed, nor the leaſt inſult offered, which could diſturb him in his laſt moments. They viewed him with the eyes of pity and forgiveneſs, and joined, with earneſtneſs, in prayers for his future welfare.

The manner in which this man was put to death was, no doubt, uncommonly mild, when compared with the atrocity of his guilt; yet I am convinced, that the ſolemn circumſtances which accompanied his execution, made a greater impreſſion on the minds of the populace, and would as effectually deter them from the crimes for which he was condemned, as if he had been broken alive on the wheel, and the execution performed in a leſs ſolemn manner.

Convinced as I am that all horrid and refined cruelty in the execution of criminals is, at beſt, unneceſſary, I never heard of any thing of that nature without horror and indignation. Other methods, no way connected with the ſufferings of the priſoner, equally deter from the crime, and, in all other reſpects, have a better influence on the minds of the multitude. The proceſſion deſcribed above, I plainly perceived, made a very deep impreſſion. I thought I ſaw more people affected by it than I have formerly obſerved among a much greater crowd, who were gathered to ſee a dozen or fourteen of their fellow-creatures dragged to the ſame death for

houſe-breaking and highway robbery, mere venial offences, in compariſon of what this Italian had perpetrated. The attendance of the Capucins, the crucifixes, the Society of Miſericordia, the ceremony of confeſſion, all have a tendency to ſtrike the mind with awe, and keep up the belief of a future ſtate; and when the multitude behold ſo many people employed, and ſo much pains taken, to ſave the ſoul of one of the moſt worthleſs of mankind, they muſt think, that the ſaving of a ſoul is a matter of great importance, and therefore naturally infer, that the ſooner they begin to take care of their own, the better. But when criminals are carried to execution with little or no ſolemnity, amidſt the ſhouts of an unconcerned rabble, who applaud them in proportion to the degree of indifference and impenitence they diſplay, and conſider the whole ſcene as a ſource of amuſement; how can ſuch exhibitions make any uſeful impreſſion, or terrify the thoughtleſs and deſperate from any wicked propenſity? If there is a country in which great numbers of young inconſiderate creatures are, ſix or eight times every year, carried to execution in this tumultuous, unaffecting manner, might not a ſtranger conclude, that the view of the legiſlature was to cut off guilty individuals in the leaſt alarming way poſſible, that others might *not* be deterred from following their example?

LETTER XLV.

Rome.

THOSE who have a real pleaſure in contemplating the remains of antique, and the nobleſt ſpecimens of modern architecture, who are ſtruck with the inimitable delicacy and expreſſion of Greek ſculpture, and wiſh to compare it with the moſt ſucceſsful efforts of the moderns, and who have an unwearied admiration of the charms of painting, may, provided they have not more important avocations elſewhere, employ a full year with ſatisfaction in this city.

What is called a regular courſe with an Antiquarian, generally takes up about ſix weeks; employing three hours a day, you may, in that time, viſit all the churches, palaces, villas, and ruins, worth ſeeing, in or near Rome. But after having made this courſe, however diſtinctly every thing may have been explained by the Antiquarian, if you do not viſit the moſt intereſting again and again, and reflect on them at more leiſure, your labour will be of little uſe; for the objects are ſo various, and thoſe you ſee on one day, ſo apt to be effaced by, or confounded with, thoſe you behold on another,

that you muſt carry away a very faint and indiſtinct recollection of any. Many travellers have experienced the truth of this obſervation.

One young Engliſh gentleman, who happens not to be violently ſmitten with the charms of virtù, and ſcorns to affect what he does not feel, thought that two or three hours a day, for a month or ſix weeks together, was rather too much time to beſtow on a purſuit in which he felt no pleaſure, and ſaw very little utility. The only advantage which, in his opinion, the greater part of us reaped from our ſix weeks tour, was, that we *could ſay*, we had ſeen a great many fine things which he had not ſeen. This was a ſuperiority which he could not brook, and which he reſolved we ſhould not long enjoy. Being fully convinced, that the buſineſs might be, with a little exertion, diſpatched in a very ſhort ſpace of time, he prevailed on a proper perſon to attend him; ordered a poſt-chaiſe and four horſes to be ready early in the morning, and driving through churches, palaces, villas, and ruins, with all poſſible expedition, he fairly ſaw, in two days, all that we had beheld during our crawling courſe of ſix weeks. I found afterwards, by the liſt he kept of what he had ſeen, that we had not the advantage of him in a ſingle picture, or the moſt mutilated remnant of a ſtatue.

I do not propoſe this young gentleman's plan, as the very beſt poſſible; but of this I am certain,

that he can give as ſatisfactory an account of the curioſities of Rome, as ſome people of my acquaintance who viewed them with *equal* ſenſibility, and at a great deal more leiſure.

Thoſe travellers who cannot remain a conſiderable time at Rome, would do well to get a judicious liſt of the moſt intereſting objects in architecture, ſculpture, and painting, that are to be ſeen here; they ought to viſit theſe frequently, and theſe only, by which means they will acquire a ſtrong and diſtinct impreſſion of what they ſee; inſtead of that tranſient and confuſed idea which a vaſt number of things, viewed ſuperficially, and in a hurry, leave in the mind. After they have examined, with due attention, the moſt magnificent and beſt preſerved remains of ancient architecture, very few have ſatisfaction in viewing a parcel of old bricks, which, they are told, formed the foundation of the baths of ſome of the Emperors. And there are not many who would regret their not having ſeen great numbers of ſtatues and pictures of inferior merit, when they had beheld all that are univerſally eſteemed the beſt. Would it not be highly judicious, therefore, in the greateſt number of travellers, without abridging the uſual time of the courſe, to make it much leſs comprehenſive?

Beſides churches, there are about thirty palaces in Rome, as full of pictures as the walls

can bear. The Borgheſe Palace alone is ſaid to contain above ſixteen hundred, all original. There alſo ten or twelve villas in the neighbourhood of this city, which are uſually viſited by ſtrangers. You may judge from this, what a taſk they undertake, who reſolve to go thro' the whole; and what kind of an idea they are likely to carry away, who perform this taſk during a ſtay of a few months. Of the villas, the Pineiana, which belongs to the Borgheſe family, is the moſt remarkable. I ſhall confine myſelf to a few curſory remarks on ſome of the moſt eſteemed curioſities it contains. The Hermaphrodite, of which you have ſeen ſo many prints and models, is accounted by many, one of the fineſt pieces of ſculpture in the world. The mattreſs, upon which this fine figure reclines, is the work of the Cavalier Bernini, and nothing can be more admirably executed. Some critics ſay, he has performed his taſk *too well*, becauſe the admiration of the ſpectator is divided between the ſtatue and the mattreſs. This, however, ought not to be imputed as a fault to that great artiſt; ſince he condeſcended to make it all, it was his buſineſs to make it as perfect as poſſible. I have heard of an artiſt at Verſailles in a different line, who attempted ſomething of the ſame nature; he had exerted all his abilities in making a periwig for a celebrated preacher, who was to preach on a particular occaſion before the court; and he imagined he had ſucceeded to a miracle. "I'll be hanged,"

ſaid he to one of his companions, "if his Ma-"jeſty, or any man of taſte, will pay much "attention to the *ſermon* to-day."

Among the antiques, there is a Centaur in marble, with a Cupid mounted on his back. The latter has the ceſtus of Venus, and the ivy crown of Bacchus, in alluſion to beauty and wine; he beats the Centaur with his fiſt, and ſeems to kick with violence to drive him along. The Centaur throws back his head and eyes with a look of remorſe, as if he were unwilling, tho' forced, to proceed. The execution of this group, is admired by thoſe who look upon it merely as a jeu d'eſprit; but it acquires additional merit, when conſidered as allegorical of men who are hurried on by the violence of their paſſions, and lament their own weakneſs, while they find themſelves unable to reſiſt.

There is another figure which claims attention, more on account of the allegory than the ſculpture. This is a ſmall ſtatue of Venus Cloacina, trampling on an impregnated uterus, and tearing the wings of Cupid. The allegory indicates, that proſtitution is equally deſtructive of generation and love. Keyſler mentioning this, calls it a ſtatue of Venus, lamenting her raſhneſs in clipping Cupid's wings.

The ſtatue called Zingara, or the Fortune-teller, is antique, all but the head, which is

Bernini's; the face has a ſtrong expreſſion of that ſly ſhrewdneſs, which belongs to thoſe whoſe trade it is to impoſe on the credulity of the vulgar; with a great look of ſome modern gypſies I have ſeen, who have impoſed moſt egregiouſly on the ſelf-love and credulity of the great.

Seneca dying in the Bath, in touchſtone; round his middle is a girdle of yellow marble; he ſtands in a baſon of blueiſh marble lined with porphyry; his knees ſeem to bend under him, from weakneſs; his features denote faintneſs, languor, and the approach of death; the eyes are enamelled, which gives the countenance a fierce and diſagreeable look. Colouring the eyes always has a bad effect in ſculpture; they form too violent a contraſt with the other features, which remain of the natural colour of the marble. When the eyes are enamelled, it is requiſite that all the face ſhould be painted, to produce the agreeable harmony of life.

The Faun dandling an infant Bacchus, is one of the gayeſt figures that can be imagined.

In this Villa, there are alſo ſome highly eſteemed pieces by Bernini. Æneas carrying his father; David ſlinging the ſtone at Goliah; and Apollo purſuing Daphne: the laſt is generally reckoned Bernini's maſterpiece: for my part, I have ſo bad a taſte as to prefer the ſecond. The figure of David is nervous, with great anatomical

juſtneſs, and a ſtrong expreſſion of keenneſs and exertion to hit his mark, and kill his enemy; but the countenance of David wants dignity. An antique artiſt, perhaps, could not have given more ardour, but he would have given more nobleneſs to the features of David. Some may ſay, that as he was but a ſhepherd, it was proper he ſhould have the look of a clown; but it ought to be remembered, that David was a very extraordinary man; and if the artiſt who formed the Belvedere Apollo, or if Agaſias the Epheſian, had treated the ſame ſubject, I imagine they would have rendered their work more intereſting, by blending the noble air of an hero with the ſimple appearance of a ſhepherd. The figures of Apollo and Daphne err in a different manner. The face and figure of Apollo are deficient in ſimplicity; the noble ſimplicity of the beſt antique ſtatues: he runs with affected graces, and his aſtoniſhment at the beginning transformation of his miſtreſs is not, in my opinion, naturally expreſſed, but ſeems rather the exaggerated aſtoniſhment of an actor. The form and ſhape of Daphne are delicately executed; but in her face, beauty is, in ſome degree, ſacrificed to the expreſſion of terror; her features are too much diſtorted by fear. An antique artiſt would have made her leſs afraid, that ſhe might have been more beautiful. In expreſſing terror, pain, and other impreſſions, there is a point where the beauty of the fineſt countenance ends, and deformity begins. I am

indebted to Mr. Lock for this obſervation. In ſome converſations I had with him at Cologny, on the ſubject of Sculpture, that gentleman remarked, that it was in the ſkilful and temperate exertion of her powers, in this nobleſt province of the art, *expreſſion*, that ancient ſculpture ſo much excelled the modern. She knew its limits, and had aſcertained them with preciſion. As far as expreſſion would go hand in hand with grace and beauty, in ſubjects intended to excite ſympathy, ſhe indulged her chiſel; but where agony threatened to induce diſtortion, and obliterate beauty, ſhe wiſely ſet bounds to imitation, remembering, that though it may be moral to pity uglineſs in diſtreſs, it is more natural to pity beauty in the ſame ſituation; and that her buſineſs was not to give the ſtrongeſt repreſentation of nature, but the repreſentation which would intereſt us moſt. That ingenious gentleman, I remember, obſerved at the ſame time, that the Greek artiſts have been accuſed of having ſacrificed character too much to technical proportion. He continued to obſerve, that what is uſually called character in a face, is probably exceſs in ſome of its parts, and particularly of thoſe which are under the influence of the mind, the leading paſſion of which marks ſome feature for its own. A perfectly ſymmetrical face bears no mark of the influence of either the paſſions or the underſtanding, and reminds you of Prometheus's clay

without his fire. On the other hand, the moderns, by ſacrificing too liberally thoſe technical proportions, which, when religiouſly obſerved, produce beauty, to expreſſion, have generally loſt the very point which they contended for. They ſeemed to think, that when a paſſion was to be expreſſed, it could not be expreſſed too ſtrongly; and that ſympathy always followed in an exact proportion with the ſtrength of the paſſion, and the force of its expreſſion. But paſſions, in their extreme, inſtead of producing ſympathy, generally excite feelings diametrically oppoſite. A vehement and clamorous demand of pity is received with neglect, and ſometimes with diſguſt; whilſt a patient and ſilent acquieſcence under the preſſure of mental affliction, or ſevere bodily pain, finds every heart upon an uniſon with its ſufferings. The ancients knew to what extent expreſſion may be carried, with good effect. The author of the famous Laocoon, in the Vatican, knew where to ſtop, and if the figure had been alone, it would have been perfect; there is exquiſite anguiſh in the countenance, but it is borne in ſilence, and without diſtortion of features. Puget thought he could go beyond the author of Laocoon; he gave voice to his Milo; he made him roaring with pain, and loſt the ſympathy of the ſpectator. In confirmation of this doctrine, Mr. Lock deſired, that when I ſhould arrive at Rome, I would examine, with attention, the celebrated ſtatue of Niobe, in the Villa de Medici. I have done ſo

again and again, and find his remarks moſt ſtrikingly juſt. The author of the Niobe has had the judgment not to exhibit all the diſtreſs which he might have placed in her countenance. This conſummate artiſt was afraid of diſturbing her features too much, knowing full well, that the point where he was to expect the moſt ſympathy was there, where diſtreſs co-operated with beauty, and where *our pity met our love*. Had he ſought it one ſtep farther, in *expreſſion*, he had loſt it. It is unjuſt, you will ſay, that men ſhould not ſympathiſe with homely women in diſtreſs, in the ſame degree as they do with the beautiful. That is very true; but it is the buſineſs of the ſculptor to apply his art to men as he finds them, not as they ought to be. Beſide, this principle has full force, and is ſtrictly true, only in ſculpture and painting. For, in real life, a woman may engage a man's eſteem and affections by a thouſand fine qualities, and a thouſand endearing ties, though ſhe is entirely deficient in beauty.

This Villa is alſo enriched by one of the moſt animated ſtatues in the world, and which, in the opinion of many men of taſte, comes neareſt, and in the judgment of ſome, equals the Apollo of the Vatican. I mean the ſtatue of the fighting Gladiator. It is difficult, however, to compare two pieces whoſe merits are ſo different. The Apollo is full of grace, majeſty, and conſcious ſuperiority; he has ſhot his arrow, and

knows its ſucceſs. There is, indeed, a ſtrong expreſſion of indignation, which opens his lips, diſtends his noſtrils, and contracts his brows; but it is the indignation of a ſuperior being, who puniſhes while he ſcorns the efforts of his enemy. The Gladiator, on the contrary, full of fire and youthful courage, oppoſes an enemy that he does not fear; but whom, it is evident, he thinks worthy of his utmoſt exertion; every limb, nerve and ſinew, is in action; his ardent features indicate the ſtrongeſt deſire, the higheſt expectation, but not a perfect ſecurity of victory. His ſhape is elegant as well as nervous, expreſſive of agility as well as ſtrength, and equally diſtant from the brawny ſtrength of the Farneſian Hercules, and the effeminate ſoftneſs of the Belvedere Antinous. The action is tranſitive (if the term may be ſo uſed), and preparatory only to another diſpoſition of body and limbs, which are to enable him to ſtrike, and which he cannot do in his preſent poſition; for the moment his right arm croſſed the perpendicular line of his right leg, the whole figure would be out of its centre. His action ſeems a combination of the defenſive and offenſive; defenſive in the *preſent* moment, the left arm being advanced to ſecure the adverſary's blow; and preparing for offence in the next, the left leg already taking its ſpring to advance in order to give the figure a centre, which may enable it to ſtrike, without riſk of falling, if the blow ſhould not take place. The action of the right arm,

however, will always remain in ſome degree problematical, the ancient being loſt; by whom the modern arm is reſtored, I never heard.

Though this fine figure generally goes by the name of the fighting Gladiator, ſome antiquarians cannot allow, that ever it was intended to repreſent a perſon of that profeſſion, but a Victor at the Olympic games; and allege, that Agaſias of Epheſus, the ſculptor's name, being inſcribed upon the pedeſtal, ſupports their opinion, becauſe the Greeks never uſed gladiators. But I fear this argument has little weight; for the Greek ſlaves at Rome put their name to their work; and the free Greek artiſts, working in Greece, in public works, found difficulty in obtaining the ſame indulgence. Thoſe who wiſh to reſcue this ſtatue from the ignoble condition of a common Gladiator, ſay further, that he looks up as if his adverſary were on horſeback, adding, that gladiators never fought on foot againſt horſemen on the Arena. Here again, I am afraid they are miſtaken. He looks no higher than the eye of an enemy on foot; the head muſt have a much greater degree of elevation to look up to the eye of an horſeman, which is the part of your adverſary which you always fix.

Some learned gentlemen, not ſatisfied that this ſtatue ſhould be thrown indiſcriminately among Gladiators and Victors of the Olympic games, have given it a particular and laſting character;

they roundly assert, that it is the identical statue, made by order of the Athenian State, in honour of their countryman Chabrias; and that it is precisely in the attitude which, according to Cornelius Nepos, that hero assumed, when he repulsed the army of Agesilaus. This idea is in the true spirit of an antiquary.

If, upon turning to that author, you remain unconvinced, and are interested in the honour of the statue, I can furnish you with no presumptive proof of its original dignity, except, that the character of the face is noble and haughty, unlike that of a slave and mercenary Gladiator. And there is no rope around the neck, as the Gladiator Moriens has, whom that circumstance sufficiently indicates to have been in that unfortunate situation.

LETTER XLVI.

Rome.

A FEW days ſince I went to call on an artiſt of my acquaintance. I met, coming out of his door, an old woman, and a very handſome girl, remarkably well ſhaped. I rallied him a little on the ſubject of his viſitors, and his good fortune in being attended in a morning by the prettieſt girl I had ſeen ſince I came to Rome. "I think myſelf fortunate," ſaid he, "in hav-"ing found a girl ſo perfectly well made, who "allows me to ſtudy her charms without reſ-"traint, and at a reaſonable price; but I aſſure "you, I can boaſt of no other kind of good for-"tune with her." "I am convinced," re-joined I, "that you take great pleaſure in your "ſtudies, and there can be no doubt that you "have made a very deſirable progreſs." "Of "that you ſhall be the judge," replied he, lead-ing me into another room, where I ſaw a full length painting of the girl, in the character of Venus, and in the *uſual dreſs* of that goddeſs. "There," ſaid he, "is the only effect my ſtu-"dies have had hitherto, and I begin to ſuſpect "that they will never produce any thing more "nearly connected with the original." He

then informed me, that the old woman I had ſeen was the girl's mother, who never failed to accompany her daughter, when ſhe came as a model to him; that the father was a tradeſman, with a numerous family, who thought this the moſt innocent uſe that his daughter's beauty could be put to, till ſhe ſhould get a huſband; and to prevent its being put to any other, his wife always accompanied her. "I have drawn "her as Venus," added he; "but for any thing "I know to the contrary, I ſhould have ap- "proached nearer to her real character if I had "painted her as Diana. She comes here mere- "ly in obedience to her parents, and gains her "bread as innocently as if ſhe were knitting "purſes in a convent from morning to night, "without ſeeing the face of a man."

"However innocent all this may be," ſaid I, "there is ſomething at which the mind revolts, "in a mother's being preſent when her daugh- "ter acts a part which, if not criminal, is, at "leaſt, highly indelicate."

"To be ſure," replied the painter, "the wo- "man has not quite ſo much delicacy as to "ſtarve, rather than let her daughter ſtand as "a model; yet ſhe ſeems to have attention to "the girl's chaſtity, too."

"Chaſtity!" anſwered I, "why this would "ſhock an *Engliſh* woman more than any thing

"which could be propoſed to her. Every other "kind of liberty muſt have been previouſly "taken with her. She muſt be a complete "proſtitute in every ſenſe of the word, before "ſhe could be brought to ſubmit to appear in "this manner."

"Your obſervation is true," replied he; "but "it does not prove that thoſe who ſubmit to "this, to prevent their becoming proſtitutes, do "not judge better than thoſe who become proſ-"titutes, and then ſubmit to this. In different "countries," continued he, "people think very "differently on ſubjects of this kind. The pa-"rents of this girl, to my knowledge, have re-"fuſed conſiderable offers from men of for-"tune, to be allowed the privilege of *viſiting* "her. They are ſo very careful of preventing "every thing of that nature, that ſhe actually "lies in the ſame bed with them both, which is "another piece of indelicacy not uncommon "among the lower people in Italy. Theſe pa-"rents have the more merit in refuſing ſuch "offers, as their acting otherwiſe would by no "means be thought extraordinary; nor would "it raiſe the ſame degree of indignation here as "in ſome other countries of Europe. Breach "of chaſtity, in females of low rank, is not "conſidered here in the ſame heinous light that "it is in ſome parts of Germany and Great-"Britain; where it is deemed a crime of ſuch "magnitude, as to require expiation, by a

" public rebuke from the parſon in the middle " of the church. I have heard of a clergyman " in the North, who had occaſion to rebuke a " young woman for having borne a child before " marriage. The accomplice in her guilt had " married her immediately after her recovery; " but this did not abate the parſon's indignation " againſt the wickedneſs they had previouſly " committed. Magdalen," ſaid he, with an aweful tone of voice, to the woman, " you " ſtand before this congregation to be rebuked " for the *barbarous* and *unnatural* crime of for- " nication."

" The reverend clergyman, ſaid I, in all pro- " bability intended to terrify his pariſhioners " from ſuch irregularities; and for this purpoſe " imagined there would be no harm in putting " them in the moſt odious point of view." " This is attended, however, by one dreadful " conſequence," replied the artiſt, " that theſe " unhappy creatures, to conceal a fault of which " ſuch a horrible idea is given, and to prevent " the ſhame of a public expoſition in the church, " are ſometimes tempted to commit a crime " which is in reality barbarous, and unnatural " in the higheſt degree."

" There is nothing," continued he, " which " has a greater tendency to render any ſet of " people worthleſs, than the idea that they are " already conſidered as ſuch. The women all

"over Great-Britain, who live in an open and "avowed breach of chaſtity, are generally more "daringly wicked, and devoid of principle, than "the Italian women who take the ſame liber-"ties."

"Would you then," ſaid I, "have women "of that kind more reſpected in Great-Britain, "in hopes that it might, in time, make them "more reſpectable?"

"I expreſs no deſire on the ſubject," repli-ed he, "I was only going to remark, that, in "avoiding one inconveniency, mankind often "fall into another; and that we are too apt to "cenſure and ridicule cuſtoms and opinions dif-"ferent from thoſe which prevail in our own "country, without having ſufficiently conſider-"ed all their immediate and remote effects. I "did not intend to decide, whether the indul-"gence with which women of a certain claſs "are viewed in Italy, or the ignominy with "which they are treated in Great-Britain, has, "upon the whole, the beſt effect in ſociety. "But I have obſerved, that the public courte-"zans in England often become quite abandon-"ed, and forget all ſenſe of gratitude or affecti-"on, even to their parents. But in Italy, wo-"men who never put any value on the virtue "of chaſtity, thoſe who ſell their favours for "money, diſplay a goodneſs of character in "other reſpects, and continue their duty and

"attachment to their parents as long as they "live. Foreigners who form a connection with "a girl in this country, find themſelves very of-"ten obliged to maintain the father, mother, "and whole family to which ſhe belongs. The "lover generally conſiders this as a very trou-"bleſome circumſtance, and endeavours to in-"ſpire his Italian miſtreſs with that total neglect "of her family which prevails among women "of her ſtamp in other countries; but he very "ſeldom ſucceeds. An Italian woman is un-"willing to quit her native city and her family, "even for a man ſhe loves; and ſeldom does, "till ſhe makes ſome proviſion for her neareſt "relations."

"You ſeem to have a very great affection "for the Italian ladies; and, as far as I can per-"ceive," ſaid I, "your paſſion is univerſal to "the whole claſs in queſtion; but you have "ſaid nothing to the eſſential article of religion. "It is to be hoped, they do not allow the du-"ties of their profeſſion to make them neglect "their ſouls."

"I ſee," replied the painter, "you are diſ-"poſed to laugh at all I have ſaid in their fa-"vour; but in anſwer to your queſtion, I will "fairly own, that their religious, or, if you "pleaſe, we ſhall rather call them their ſuper-"ſtitious ſentiments, ſeem to be no way influ-"enced by their profeſſion; nor are the duties

"of their profeſſion in any degree affected by "theſe ſentiments. They attend maſs, and the "ceremonies of devotion, with as much punc- "tuality as if their lives were regular in all "other reſpects; and they paſs their lives, in "other reſpects, as if they had never heard of "any religious ſyſtem but that of Epicurus. In "ſome countries of Europe, women of their "ſtamp often deſpiſe every appearance of de- "cency, aſſume the diſguſting depravity of male "debauchees, with all the airs of affected infi- "delity, and real profligacy; but *here* they al- "ways remember they are women; and, after "they have loſt the moſt valued and brighteſt "ornament of their ſex, ſtill endeavour to re- "tain ſome of the others."

"After all you have ſaid in their favour," ſaid I, "their condition is certainly not to be "envied. If, therefore, you have any regard "for your *young Venus*, you will do well to "leave her under the care of her mother, and "never endeavour to introduce her into the "community whoſe eulogium you have been "making."

When I returned from the houſe of this artiſt, I found Mr. —— waiting for me at our lodgings. He has of late paid his court very aſſiduouſly to a lady of high rank in this place: ſhe is diſtinguiſhed, even here, for a punctilious obſervance of all the ceremonies appointed by

the church, and could not eat meat on a meagre-day, or deviate from the canonical regulations in any point of equal importance, without remorſe; but in matters of gallantry, ſhe has the reputation of being infinitely more liberal, both in her ſentiments and practice. She has been for ſome time provided with a very able and reſpectable lover, of her own country. This did not make her blind to the good qualities of Mr. ——, with whom ſhe formed a very intimate connection, ſoon after his arrival here; not that ſhe prefers him to her other lover, but merely from a ſtrong ſenſe of the truth and beauty of his arithmetical axiom—one and one make two. The new arrangement with our countryman, however pleaſing to the lady, gave offence to her Father Confeſſor. The ſcrupulous eccleſiaſtic was of opinion, that a connection of this nature with a heretic was more criminal than with a man of her own communion. Mr. —— was juſt come from the lady to our lodgings; he had found her in worſe humour than he had ever obſerved before, though her temper is not the mildeſt in the world. Mr. —— entered as the Confeſſor went out; ſhe ſhut the door after him with a violence which ſhook the whole houſe, muttering, as ſhe returned to her ſeat, *Che ti poſſino Caſcar le braccia Vecchio Dondolone.* Mr. —— expreſſed his concern on ſeeing her ſo much agitated. "No wonder," ſaid ſhe, "that "ſtubborn Animalaccio who is juſt gone out, "has had the inſolence to refuſe me abſolution.

"As I expected you this morning, I ſent for "him betimes, that the matter might have been "expedited before you ſhould come; but here "I have been above an hour endeavouring to "perſuade him, but all to no purpoſe; nothing "I could ſay was able to mollify the obſtinate "old greaſy raſcal." Mr. —— joined in abuſing the Confeſſor's perverſeneſs, hinting, at the ſame time, that ſhe ought to deſpiſe it as a matter of little importance; that ſhe was ſure of receiving abſolution ſooner or later; and, whenever it happened, all the tranſactions of the interval would be comprehended within that act of grace. Upon the ſtrength of this reaſoning, Mr. —— was proceeding to fulfil the purpoſe of his viſit with as much alacrity as if the moſt complete diſcharge had been granted for all proceedings—"*Pian Piano Idol mio*," cried the lady, "*biſogna rimetterſi alla voluntà di Dio.*" She then told her lover, that although ſhe deſpiſed the Confeſſor as much as he could do, yet ſhe muſt take care of her own ſoul; that not having ſettled her accounts with heaven for a conſiderable time, ſhe was determined not to begin a new ſcore till the old ſhould be cleared; adding, for her principal reaſon, *Patto chiaro, amico caro.*

LETTER XLVII.

Rome.

I BEG you may not ſuſpect me of affectation, or that I wiſh to aſſume the character of a connoiſſeur, when I tell you, that I have very great pleaſure in contemplating the antique ſtatues and buſts, of which there are ſuch numbers in this city. It is a natural curioſity, and I have had it all my life in a ſtrong degree, to ſee celebrated men, thoſe whoſe talents and great qualities can alone render the preſent age an intereſting object to poſterity, and prevent its being loſt, like the dark ages which ſucceeded the deſtruction of the Roman empire, in the oblivious vortex of time, leaving ſcarcely a wreck behind. The durable monuments raiſed to fame by the inſpired genius of *Pitt*, and the invincible ſpirit of *Frederick*, will command the admiration of future ages, outlive the power of the empires which *they* aggrandized, and forbid the period in which *they* flouriſhed, from ever paſſing away like the baſeleſs fabric of a viſion. The buſts and ſtatues of thoſe memorable men will be viewed, by ſucceeding generations, with the ſame regard and attention which we now beſtow on thoſe of Cicero and Cæſar. We

expect to find ſomething peculiarly noble and expreſſive in features which were animated, and which, we imagine, muſt have been in ſome degree modelled, by the ſentiments of thoſe to whom they belonged. It is not rank, it is character alone which intereſts poſterity. We know that men may be ſeated on thrones, who would have been placed more ſuitably to their talents on the working-table of a taylor; we therefore give little attention to the buſts or coins of the vulgar emperors. In the countenance of Claudius, we expect nothing more noble than the phlegmatic tranquillity of an acquieſcing cuckold; in Caligula or Nero, the unrelenting frown of a negro-driver, or the inſolent air of any unprincipled ruffian in power. Even in the high-praiſed Auguſtus we look for nothing eſſentially great, nothing ſuperior to what we ſee in thoſe minions of fortune, who are exalted, by a concurrence of incidents, to a ſituation in life to which their talents would never have raiſed them, and which their characters never deſerved. In the face of Julius we expect to find the traces of deep reflection, magnanimity, and the anxiety natural to the man who had overturned the liberties of his native country, and who muſt have ſecretly dreaded the reſentment of a ſpirited people; and in the face of Marcus Brutus we look for independence, conſcious integrity, and a mind capable of the higheſt effort of virtue.

It is natural to regret, that, of the number of antique ſtatues which have come to us tolerably entire, ſo great a proportion are repreſentations of gods and goddeſſes. Had they been intended for real perſons, we might have had a perfect knowledge of the face and figure of the greateſt part of the moſt diſtinguiſhed citizens of ancient Greece and Rome. A man of unrelaxing wiſdom would ſmile with contempt, and aſk, if our having perfect repreſentations of all the heroes, poets, and philoſophers recorded in hiſtory, would make us either wiſer or more learned? to which I anſwer, That there are a great many things, which neither can add to my ſmall ſtock of learning nor wiſdom, and yet give me more pleaſure and ſatisfaction than thoſe which do; and, unfortunately for mankind, the greateſt part of them reſemble me in this particular.

But though I would with pleaſure have given up a great number of the Jupiters and Apollos and Venuſes, whoſe ſtatues we have, in exchange for an equal, or even a ſmaller, number of mere mortals whom I could name; I by no means conſider the ſtatues of thoſe deities as unintereſting. Though they are imaginary beings, yet each of them has a diſtinct character of his own of claſſical authority, which has long been impreſſed on our memories; and we aſſume the right of deciding on the artiſt's ſkill, and applauding or blaming, as he has ſucceeded or failed in expreſſing the eſtabliſhed character

of the god intended. From the ancient artiſts having exerciſed their genius in forming the images of an order of beings ſuperior to mankind, another and a greater advantage is ſuppoſed to have followed; it prompted the artiſts to attempt the uniting in one form, the various beauties and excellencies which nature had diſperſed in many. This was not ſo eaſy a taſk as may by ſome be imagined; for that which has a fine effect in one particular face or perſon, may appear a deformity when combined with a different complexion, different features, or a different ſhape. It therefore required great judgment and taſte to collect thoſe various graces, and combine them with elegance and truth; and repeated efforts of this kind are imagined to have inſpired ſome of the ancient ſculptors with ſublimer ideas of beauty than nature herſelf ever exhibited, as appears in ſome of their works which have reached our own times.

Though the works of no modern artiſt can ſtand a compariſon with the great maſterpieces now alluded to, yet nothing can be more abſurd than the idea which ſome people entertain, that all antique ſtatues are of more excellent workmanſhip than the modern. We ſee, every day, numberleſs ſpecimens of every ſpecies of ſculpture, from the largeſt ſtatues and baſſos-relievos, to the ſmalleſt cameos

and intaglios, that are undoubtedly antique, and yet far inferior, not only to the works of the beſt artiſts of Leo the Tenth's time, but alſo to thoſe of many artiſts now alive in various parts of Europe. The paſſion for ſculpture, which the Romans caught from the Greeks, became almoſt univerſal. Statues were not only the chief ornaments of their temples and palaces, but alſo of the houſes of the middle, and even the loweſt, order of citizens. They were prompted to adorn them with the figures of a few favourite deities, by religion, as well as vanity: no man, but an atheiſt or a beggar, could be without them. This being the caſe, we may eaſily conceive what graceleſs divinities many of them muſt have been; for in this, no doubt, as in every other manufactory, there muſt occaſionally have been bungling workmen employed, even in the moſt flouriſhing æra of the arts, and goods finiſhed in a very careleſs and hurried manner, to anſwer the conſtant demand, and ſuit the dimenſions of every purſe. We muſt have a very high idea of the number of ſtatues of one kind or other, which were in old Rome, when we conſider how many are ſtill to be ſeen; how many have at different periods been carried away, by the curious, to every country in Europe; how many were mutilated and deſtroyed by the gothic brutality of Barbarians, and the ill-directed zeal of the early Chriſtians, who thought it a duty to exterminate

every image, without diſtinction of age or ſex, and without conſidering whether they were of God or man. This obliged the wretched heathens to hide the ſtatues of their gods and of their anceſtors in the bowels of the earth, where unqueſtionably great numbers of them ſtill remain. Had they not been thus barbarouſly hewed to pieces, and buried, I had almoſt ſaid, alive, we might have had ſeveral equal to the great maſter-pieces in the Vatican; for it is natural to imagine, that the rage of the zealots would be chiefly directed againſt thoſe ſtatues which were in the higheſt eſtimation with the heathens; and we muſt likewiſe imagine, that theſe would be the pieces which they, on their part, would endeavour, by every poſſible means, to preſerve from their power, and bury in the earth. Of thoſe which have been dug up, I ſhall mention only a very few, beginning with the Farneſian Hercules, which has been long admired as an exquiſite model of maſculine ſtrength; yet, admirable as it is, it does not pleaſe all the world. I am told that the women in particular find ſomething unſatisfactory, and even odious, in this figure; which, however majeſtic, is deficient in the charms moſt agreeable to them, and which might have been expected in the ſon of Jupiter and the beauteous Alcmena. A lady whom I accompanied to the Farneſe palace, turned away from it in diſguſt. I could

not imagine what had ſhocked her. She told me, *after recollection*, that ſhe could not bear the ſtern ſeverity of his countenance, his large brawny limbs, and the club with which he was armed; which gave him more the appearance of one of thoſe giants that, according to the old romances, carried away virgins and ſhut them up in gloomy caſtles, than the gallant Hercules, the lover of Omphale. Finally, the lady declared, ſhe was convinced this ſtatue could not be a juſt repreſentation of Hercules; for it was not in the nature of things, that a man ſo formed could ever have been a reliever of diſtreſſed damſels.

Without ſuch powerful ſupport as that of the fair ſex, I ſhould not have expoſed myſelf to the reſentment of connoiſſeurs, by any expreſſion which they might conſtrue an attack upon this favourite ſtatue; but, with their ſupport, I will venture to aſſert, that the Farneſe Hercules is faulty both in his form and attitude: the former is too unwieldy for active exertion, and the latter exhibits vigour *exhauſted*. A reſting attitude is ſurely not the moſt proper in which the all-conquering god of ſtrength could be repreſented. Reſt implies fatigue, and fatigue ſtrength exhauſted. A repoſing Hercules is almoſt a contradiction. Invincible activity, and inexhauſtible ſtrength, are his characteriſtics. The ancient artiſt has erred, not only in giving him an attitude

which ſuppoſes his ſtrength wants recruiting, but in the nature of the ſtrength itſelf, the character of which ſhould not be paſſive, but active.

Near to Hercules, under the arcades of the ſame Palezzo Farneſe, is a moſt beautiful ſtatue of Flora. The great advantage which ancient artiſts had in attending the exerciſes of the gymnaſia, has been repeatedly urged as the reaſon of their ſuperiority over the moderns in ſculpture. We are told, that beſides the uſual exerciſes of the gymnaſia, all thoſe who propoſed to contend at the Olympic games, were obliged, by the regulations, to prepare themſelves, by exerciſing publicly for a year at Elis; and the ſtatuaries and painters conſtantly attended on the Arena, where they had opportunities of beholding the fineſt ſhaped, the moſt graceful, and moſt vigorous of the Grecian youth employed in thoſe manly ſports, in which the power of every muſcle was exerted, and all their various actions called forth, and where the human form appeared in an infinite variety of different attitudes. By a conſtant attendance at ſuch a ſchool, independent of any other circumſtance, the artiſts are ſuppoſed to have acquired a more animated, true, and graceful ſtyle, than poſſibly can be caught from viewing the tame, mercenary models, which are exhibited in our academies. On the other hand, I have heard it aſſerted, that

the artiſt, who formed the Farneſian Flora, could not have improved his work, or derived any of its excellencies, from the circumſtances above enumerated; becauſe the figure is in a ſtanding poſture, and clothed. In the light, eaſy flow of the drapery, and in the contour of the body being diſtinctly pronounced through it, as if the figure were naked, the chief merit of this ſtatue is thought to conſiſt. But this reaſoning does not ſeem juſt; for the daily opportunities the ancient artiſts had of ſeeing naked figures, in every variety of action and attitude, muſt have given them advantages over the moderns, in forming even drapery figures. At Sparta, the women, upon particular occaſions, danced naked. In their own families, they were ſeen every day clothed in light draperies; and ſo ſecondary was every conſideration, even that of decency, to art, that the prettieſt virgins of Agrigentum, it is recorded, were called upon by the legiſlature, without diſtinction, to ſhew themſelves naked to a painter, to enable him to paint a Venus. Whilſt the moderns, therefore, muſt acknowledge their inferiority to the ancients in the art of ſculpture, they may be allowed merit, on account of the cauſe, to which it ſeems, in ſome meaſure at leaſt, to be owing.

The fineſt ſpecimens of antique ſculpture are to be ſeen in the Vatican. In theſe the Greek artiſts diſplay an unqueſtionable ſuperiority over

the moſt ſucceſsful efforts of the moderns. For me to attempt a deſcription of theſe maſterpieces, which have been deſcribed a thouſand times, and imitated as often, without once having had juſtice done them, would be equally vain and ſuperfluous. I confine myſelf to a very few obſervations. The moſt inſenſible of mankind muſt be ſtruck with horror at ſight of the Laocoon. On one of my viſits to the Vatican, I was accompanied by two perſons, who had never been there before: one of them is accuſed of being perfectly callous to every thing which does not immediately touch his own perſon; the other is a worthy, good man: the firſt, after ſtaring for ſome time with marks of terror at the groupe, at length recovered himſelf, exclaiming with a laugh,—"Egad, I was "afraid theſe d—d ſerpents would have left the "fellows they are devouring, and made a ſnap "at me; but I am happy to recollect they are "of marble."——"I thank you, Sir, moſt "heartily," ſaid the other, "for putting me "in mind of that circumſtance; till you menti-"oned it, I was in agony for thoſe two youths."

Nothing can be conceived more admirably executed than this affecting groupe; in all probability, it never would have entered into my own head that it could have been in any reſpect improved. But when I firſt had the happineſs of becoming acquainted with Mr. Lock, a period of my life which I ſhall always recollect

with peculiar pleaſure, I remember my converſing with him upon this ſubject; and that Gentleman, after mentioning the execution of this piece, in the higheſt terms of praiſe, obſerved that, had the figure of Laocoon been *alone*, it would have been perfect. As a man ſuffering the moſt excruciating bodily pain with becoming fortitude, it admits of no improvement; his proportions, his form, his action, his expreſſion, are exquiſite. But when his ſons appear, he is no longer an inſulated, ſuffering individual, who, when he has met pain and death with dignity, has done all that could be expected from man; he commences *father*, and a much wider field is opened to the artiſt. We expect the deepeſt pathos in the exhibition of the ſublimeſt character that art can offer to the contemplation of the human mind: A father forgetting pain, and inſtant death, to ſave his children. This Sublime and Pathetic the artiſt either did not ſee, or deſpaired of attaining. Laocoon's ſufferings are merely corporal; he is deaf to the cries of his agonizing children, who are calling on him for aſſiſtance. But had he been throwing a look of anguiſh upon his ſons, had he ſeemed to have forgotten his own ſufferings in theirs, he would have commanded the ſympathy of the ſpectator in a much higher degree. On the whole, Mr. Lock was of opinion, that the execution of this groupe is perfect, but that the conception is not equal to the execution. I ſhall leave it to others to decide

whether Mr. Lock, in theſe obſervations, ſpoke like a man of taſte: I am ſure he ſpoke like a father. I have ſenſibility to feel the beauty and juſtneſs of the remark, though I had not the ingenuity to make it.

It is diſputed whether this groupe was formed from Virgil's deſcription of the death of Laocoon and his ſons, or the deſcription made from the groupe; it is evident, from their minute reſemblance, that one or other muſt have been the caſe. The Poet mentions a circumſtance, which could not be repreſented by the ſculptor; he ſays that, although every other perſon around ſought ſafety by flight, the father was attacked by the ſerpents, while he was advancing to the aſſiſtance of his ſons—

——auxilio ſubeuntem ac tela ferentem.

This deficiency in the ſculptor's art would have been finely ſupplied by the improvement which Mr. Lock propoſed.

Reflecting on the dreadful condition of three perſons entangled in the horrid twinings of ſerpents, and after contemplating the varied anguiſh ſo ſtrongly expreſſed in their countenances, it is a relief to turn the eye to the heavenly figure of the Apollo. To form an adequate idea of the beauty of this ſtatue, it is abſolutely neceſſary to ſee it. With all the advantages of colour and life, the human form never appeared ſo

beautiful; and we never can ſufficiently admire the artiſt, who has endowed marble with a finer expreſſion of grace, dignity, and underſtanding, than ever were ſeen in living features. In the forming of this inimitable figure, the artiſt ſeems to have wrought after an ideal form of beauty, ſuperior to any in nature, and which exiſted only in his own imagination.

The admired ſtatue of Antinous is in the ſame Court. Nothing can be more light, elegant, and eaſy; the proportions are exact, and the execution perfect. It is an exquiſite repreſentation of the moſt beautiful youth that ever lived.

The ſtatue of Apollo repreſents ſomething ſuperior, and the emotions it excites are all of the ſublime caſt.

LETTER XLVIII.

Rome.

THE preſent Pope, who has aſſumed the name of Pius the Sixth, is a tall, well-made man, about ſixty years of age, but retaining in his look all the freſhneſs of a much earlier period of life. He lays a greater ſtreſs on the ceremonious part of religion than his predeceſſor Ganganelli, in whoſe reign a great relaxation of church-diſcipline is thought to have taken place. The late Pope was a man of moderation, good ſenſe, and ſimplicity of manners; and could not go through all the oſtentatious parade which his ſtation required, without reluctance, and marks of diſguſt. He knew that the opinions of mankind had undergone a very great change ſince thoſe ceremonies were eſtabliſhed; and that ſome of the moſt reſpectable of the ſpectators conſidered as perfectly frivolous many things which formerly had been held as ſacred. A man of good ſenſe may ſeem to lay the greateſt weight on ceremonies which he himſelf conſiders as ridiculous, provided he thinks the people, in whoſe ſight he goes through them, are impreſſed with a conviction of their importance; but if he knows that ſome of the beholders are entirely of a different way of thinking, he will be ſtrongly

tempted to evince, by ſome means or other, that he deſpiſes the fooleries he performs, as much as any of them. This, in all probability, was the caſe with Ganganelli; who, beſides, was an enemy to fraud and hypocriſy of every kind. But, however remiſs he may have been with regard to the etiquette of his ſpiritual functions, every body acknowledges his diligence and activity in promoting the temporal good of his ſubjects. He did all in his power to revive trade, and to encourage manufactures and induſtry of every kind. He built no churches, but he repaired the roads all over the eccleſiaſtical ſtate; he reſtrained the malevolence of bigots, removed abſurd prejudices, and promoted ſentiments of charity and good-will to mankind in general, without excepting even heretics. His enemies, the Jeſuits, with an intention to make him odious in the eyes of his own ſubjects, gave him the name of the Proteſtant Pope. If they ſuppoſed that this calumny would be credited, on account of the conduct above mentioned, they at once paid the higheſt compliment to the Pope and the Proteſtant religion. The careleſs manner in which Ganganelli performed certain functions, and the general tenour of his life and ſentiments, were lamented by politicians, as well as by bigots. However frivolous the former might think many ceremonies in themſelves, they ſtill conſidered them as of political importance, in ſuch a government as that of Rome; and the Conclave held on the death of the late Pope, are

thought to have been in ſome degree influenced by ſuch conſiderations in chuſing his ſucceſſor. The preſent Pope, before he was raiſed to that dignity, was conſidered as a firm believer in all the tenets of the Roman Church, and a ſtrict and ſcrupulous obſerver of all its injunctions and ceremonials. As his pretenſions, in point of family, fortune, and connexions, were ſmaller than thoſe of moſt of his brother cardinals, it is the more probable that he owed his elevation to this part of his character, which rendered him a proper perſon to check the progreſs of abuſes that had been entirely neglected by the late Pope; under whoſe adminiſtration free-thinking was ſaid to have been countenanced, Proteſtantiſm in general regarded with diminiſhed abhorrence, and the Calviniſts in particular treated with a degree of indulgence, to which their inveterate enmity to the church of Rome gave them no title. Several inſtances of this are enumerated, and one in particular, which, I dare ſay, you will think a ſtronger proof of the late Pope's good ſenſe and good humour, than of that negligence to which his enemies imputed it.

A Scotch preſbyterian having heated his brain, by reading the Book of Martyrs, the cruelties of the Spaniſh Inquiſition, and the Hiſtories of all the perſecutions that ever were raiſed by the Roman Catholics againſt the Proteſtants, was ſeized with a dread, that the ſame horrors were juſt

about to be renewed. This terrible idea diſturbed his imagination day and night; he thought of nothing but racks and ſcaffolds; and, on one occaſion, he dreamt that there was a continued train of bonfires, with a tar-barrel and a Proteſtant in each, all the way from Smithfield to St. Andrew's.

He communicated the anxiety and diſtreſs of his mind to a worthy ſenſible clergyman who lived in the neighbourhood. This gentleman took great pains to quiet his fears, proving to him, by ſtrong and obvious arguments, that there was little or no danger of ſuch an event as he dreaded. Theſe reaſonings had a powerful effect while they were delivering, but the impreſſion did not laſt, and was always effaced by a few pages of the Book of Martyrs. As ſoon as the clergyman remarked this, he adviſed the relations to remove that, and every book which treated of perſecution and martyrdom, entirely out of the poor man's reach. This was done accordingly, and books of a leſs gloomy complexion were ſubſtituted in their place; but as all of them formed a ſtrong contraſt with the colour of his mind, he could not bear their peruſal, but betook himſelf to the ſtudy of the Bible, which was the only book of his ancient library which had been left; and ſo ſtrong a hold had his former ſtudies taken of his imagination, that he could reliſh no part of the Bible, except the Revelation of St. John, a great part of which, he thought, referred to

the whore of Babylon, or in other words, the Pope of Rome. This part of the ſcripture he peruſed continually with unabating ardour and delight. His friend, the clergyman having obſerved this, took occaſion to ſay, that every part of the Holy Bible, was, without doubt, moſt ſublime, and wonderfully inſtructive; yet he was ſurpriſed to ſee that he limited his ſtudies entirely to the laſt book, and neglected all the reſt. To which the other replied, That *he* who was a divine, and a man of learning, might, with propriety, read all the ſacred volume from beginning to end; but, for his own part, he thought proper to confine himſelf to what he could underſtand; and *therefore*, though he had a due reſpect for all the ſcripture, he acknowledged he gave a preference to the Revelation of St. John. This anſwer entirely ſatisfied the clergyman; he did not think it expedient to queſtion him any farther; he took his leave, after having requeſted the people of the family with whom this perſon lived, to have a watchful eye on their relation. In the mean time, this poor man's terrors, with regard to the revival of popery and perſecution, daily augmented; and nature, in all probability, would have ſunk under the weight of ſuch accumulated anxiety, had not a thought occurred which relieved his mind in an inſtant, by ſuggeſting an infallible method of preventing all the evils which his imagination had been brooding over for ſo long a time. The happy idea which afforded him ſo much comfort, was no other, than that

he ſhould immediately go to Rome, and convert the Pope from the Roman Catholic to the Preſbyterian religion. The moment he hit on this fortunate expedient, he felt at once the ſtrongeſt impulſe to undertake the taſk, and the fulleſt conviction that his undertaking would be crowned with ſucceſs; it is no wonder, therefore, that his countenance threw off its former gloom, and that all his features brightened with the heart-felt thrillings of happineſs and ſelf-applauſe. While his relations congratulated each other on this agreeable change, the exulting viſionary, without communicating his deſign to any mortal, ſet out for London, took his paſſage to Leghorn, and, in a ſhort time after, arrived in perfect health of body, and in exalted ſpirits, at Rome.

He directly applied to an eccleſiaſtic of his own country, of whoſe obliging temper he had previouſly heard, and whom he conſidered as a proper perſon to procure him an interview neceſſary for the accompliſhment of his project. He informed that gentleman, that he earneſtly wiſhed to have a conference with the Pope, on a buſineſs of infinite importance, and which admitted of no delay. It was not difficult to perceive the ſtate of this poor man's mind; the good-natured eccleſiaſtic endeavoured to ſooth and amuſe him, putting off the conference till a diſtant day; in hopes that means might be fallen on, during the interval, to prevail on him to return to his own country. A few days after

this, however, he happened to go St. Peter's church, at the very time when his Holineſs was performing ſome religious ceremony. At this ſight our impatient miſſionary felt all his paſſions inflamed with irreſiſtible ardour; he could no longer wait for the expected conference, but burſting out with zealous indignation, he exclaimed, "O thou beaſt of nature, with ſeven "heads and ten horns! thou mother of harlots, "arrayed in purple and ſcarlet, and decked with "gold and precious ſtones and pearls! throw "away the golden cup of abominations, and "the filthineſs of thy fornication!"

You may eaſily imagine the aſtoniſhment and hubbub that ſuch an apoſtrophe, from ſuch a perſon, in ſuch a place, would occaſion; he was immediately carried to priſon by the Swiſs halberdiers.

When it was known that he was a Britiſh ſubject, ſome who underſtood Engliſh were ordered to attend his examination. The firſt queſtion aſked of him was, "What had brought him to "Rome?" He anſwered, "To anoint the eyes "of the ſcarlet whore with eye-ſalve, that ſhe "might ſee her wickedneſs." They aſked, "Who he meant by the ſcarlet whore?" He anſwered, "Who elſe could he mean, but her "who ſitteth upon ſeven mountains who hath "ſeduced the kings of the earth to commit for-"nication, and who hath gotten drunk with the

"blood of the ſaints, and the blood of the mar-
"tyrs?" Many other queſtions were aſked, and ſuch provoking anſwers returned, that ſome ſuſpected the man affected madneſs, that he might give vent to his rancour and petulance with impunity; and they were for condemning him to the gallies, that he might be taught more ſenſe and better manners. But when they communicated their ſentiments to Clement the Fourteenth, he ſaid, with great good humour, "That he never had heard of any body whoſe "underſtanding or politeneſs had been much im-"proved at that ſchool; that although the poor "man's firſt addreſs had been a little rough and "abrupt, yet he could not help conſidering him-"ſelf as obliged to him for his good intentions, "and for his undertaking ſuch a long journey "with a view to do good." He afterwards gave orders to treat the man with gentleneſs while he remained in confinement, and to put him on board the firſt ſhip bound from Civita Vecchia to England, defraying the expence of his paſſage. However humane and reaſonable this conduct may be thought by many, there were people who condemned it as an injudicious piece of lenity, which might have a tendency to ſink the dignity of the ſacred office, and expoſe it to future inſults. If ſuch behaviour as this did not paſs without blame, it may be eaſily ſuppoſed, that few of the late Pope's actions eſcaped uncenſured; and many who loved the eaſy amiable diſpoſitions of the man, were of

opinion, that the ſpirit of the times required a different character on the Papal throne. This idea prevailed among the Cardinals at the late election, and the Conclave is ſuppoſed to have fixed on Cardinal Braſchi to be Pope, from the ſame motive that the Roman ſenate ſometimes choſe a Dictator to reſtore and enforce the ancient diſcipline.

LETTER XLIX.

Rome.

PIUS the Sixth performs all the religious functions of his office in the moſt ſolemn manner; not only on public and extraordinary occaſions, but alſo in the moſt common acts of devotion. I happened lately to be at St. Peter's church, when there was ſcarcely any other body there; while I lounged from chapel to chapel, looking at the ſculpture and paintings, the Pope entered with a very few attendants; when he came to the ſtatue of St. Peter, he was not ſatisfied with bowing, which is the uſual mark of reſpect ſhewn to that image; or with kneeling, which is performed by more zealous perſons; or with kiſſing the foot, which I formerly imagined concluded the climax of devotion; he bowed, he knelt, he kiſſed the foot, and then he rubbed his brow and his whole head with every mark of humility, fervour, and adoration, upon the ſacred ſtump.—It is no more, one half of the foot having been long ſince worn away by the lips of the pious; and if the example of his Holineſs is univerſally imitated, nothing but a miracle can prevent the leg, thigh, and other parts from meeting with the ſame fate. This

uncommon appearance of zeal in the Pope, is not imputed to hypocriſy or to policy, but is ſuppoſed to proceed entirely from a conviction of the efficacy of thoſe holy frictions; an opinion which has given people a much higher idea of the ſtrength of his faith, than of his underſtanding. This being jubilee year, he may poſſibly think a greater appearance of devotion neceſſary now, than at any other time. The firſt jubilee was inſtituted by Boniface the Eighth, in the year 1300. Many ceremonies and inſtitutions of the Roman Catholic church are founded on thoſe of the old Heathens. This is evidently an imitation of the Roman ſecular games, which were exhibited every hundredth year in honour of the gods *; they laſted three days and three nights; they were attended with great pomp, and drew vaſt numbers of people to Rome, from all parts of Italy, and the moſt diſtant provinces. Boniface, recollecting this, determined to inſtitute ſomething analogous, which would immortalize his own name, and promote the intereſt of the Roman Catholic religion in general, and that of the city of Rome in particular. He embraced the favourable opportunity which the beginning of a century preſented; he invented a few extraordinary ceremonies, and declared the year 1300 the firſt jubilee year, during which he aſſured mankind,

* The Carmen Seculare of Horace was compoſed on occaſion of thoſe celebrated by Auguſtus in the year of Rome 736.

that heaven would be in a particular manner propitious, in granting indulgences, and remiſſion of ſins, to all who ſhould come to Rome, and attend the functions there to be performed, at this fortunate period, which was not to occur again for a hundred years. This drew a great concourſe of wealthy ſinners to Rome; and the extraordinary circulation of money it occaſioned, was ſtrongly felt all over the Pope's dominions. Clement the Sixth, regretting that theſe advantages ſhould occur ſo ſeldom, abridged the period, and declared there would be a jubilee every fifty years; the ſecond was accordingly celebrated in the year 1350. Sixtus the Fifth, imagining that the interval was ſtill too long, once more retrenched the half; and ever ſince there has been a jubilee every twenty-fifth year*. It is not likely that any future Pope will think of ſhortening this period; if any alteration were again to take place, it moſt probably would be, to reſtore the ancient period of fifty or a hundred years; for, inſtead of the wealthy pilgrims who flocked to Rome from every quarter of Chriſtendom, ninety-nine in a hundred of thoſe who come now, are ſupported by alms during their journey, or are barely able to defray their own expences by the ſtricteſt œconomy; and his Holineſs is ſuppoſed at preſent to derive no

* To this laſt abridgment I am indebted for having ſeen the ceremonies and proceſſions on the termination of this ſacred year.

other advantage from the uncommon fatigue he is obliged to go through on the jubilee year, except the ſatisfaction he feels, in reflecting on the benefit his labours confer on the ſouls of the beggars, and other travellers, who reſort from all corners of Italy to Rome, on this bleſſed occaſion. The States which border on the Pope's dominions, ſuffer many temporal inconveniencies from the zeal of the peaſants and manufacturers, the greater part of whom ſtill make a point of viſiting St. Peter's on the jubilee year; the loſs ſuſtained by the countries which ſuch emigrants abandon, is not balanced by any advantage transferred to that to which they reſort; the good ariſing on the whole, being entirely of a ſpiritual nature. By far the greater number of pilgrims come from the kingdom of Naples, whoſe inhabitants are ſaid to be of a very devout and very amorous diſpoſition. The firſt prompts them to go to Rome in ſearch of that abſolution which the ſecond renders neceſſary; and on the year of jubilee, when indulgences are to be had at an eaſier rate than at any other time, thoſe who can afford it generally carry away ſuch a ſtock, as not only is ſufficient to clear old ſcores, but will alſo ſerve as an indemnifying fund for future tranſgreſſions.

There is one door into the church of St. Peter's, which is called the Holy Door. This is always walled up, except on this diſtinguiſhed year; and even then no perſon is permitted to

enter by it, but in the humbleſt poſture. The pilgrims, and many others, prefer crawling into the church upon their knees, by this door; to walking in; the uſual way, by any other. I was preſent at the ſhutting up of this Holy Door. The Pope being ſeated on a raiſed ſeat, or kind of throne, ſurrounded by Cardinals and other eccleſiaſtics, an anthem was ſung, accompanied by all ſorts of muſical inſtruments. During the performance, his Holineſs deſcended from the throne, with a golden trowel in his hand, placed the firſt brick, and applied ſome mortar; he then returned to his ſeat, and the door was inſtantly built up by more expert, though leſs hallowed, workmen; and will remain as it is now, till the beginning of the nineteenth century, when it will be again opened, by the Pope then in being, with the ſame ſolemnity that it has been now ſhut. Though his Holineſs places but a ſingle brick, yet it is very remarkable that this never fails to communicate its influence, in ſuch a rapid and powerful manner, that, within about an hour, or at moſt an hour and a half, all the other bricks, which form the wall of the Holy Door, acquire an equal degree of ſanctity with that placed by the Pope's own hands. The common people and pilgrims are well acquainted with this wonderful effect. At the beginning of this Jubilee-year, when the late wall was thrown down, men, women, and children ſcrambled and fought for the fragments of the bricks and mortar, with the ſame eagerneſs which leſs

enlightened mobs diſplay, on days of public rejoicing, when handfuls of money are thrown among them. I have been often aſſured that thoſe pieces of brick, beſides their ſanctity, have alſo the virtue of curing many of the moſt obſtinate diſeaſes: and, if newſpapers were permitted at Rome, there is not the leaſt reaſon to doubt, that thoſe cures would be atteſted publicly by the patients, in a manner as ſatisfactory and convincing as are the cures performed daily by the pills, powders, drops, and balſams advertiſed in the London newſpapers. After the ſhutting of the Holy Door, maſs was celebrated at midnight; and the ceremony was attended by vaſt multitudes of people. For my own part, I ſuſpended my curioſity till next day, which was Chriſtmas-day, when I returned again to St. Peter's church, and ſaw the Pope perform maſs on that ſolemn occaſion. His Holineſs went through all the evolutions of the ceremony with an addreſs and flexibility of body, which are rarely to be found in thoſe who wear the tiara; who are, generally ſpeaking, men bowing under the load of years and infirmities. His preſent Holineſs has hitherto ſuffered from neither. His features are regular, and he has a fine countenance; his perſon is ſtraight, and his movements graceful. His leg and foot are remarkably well made, and always ornamented with ſilk ſtockings, and red ſlippers, of the moſt delicate conſtruction. Notwithſtanding that the papal uniforms are by no means calculated to ſet

off the perſon to the greateſt advantage, yet the peculiar neatneſs with which they are put on, and the nice adjuſtment of their moſt minute parts, ſufficiently prove that his preſent Holineſs is not inſenſible of the charms of his perſon, or unſolicitous about his external ornaments. Though verging towards the winter of life, his cheeks ſtill glow with autumnal roſes, which, at a little diſtance, appear as blooming as thoſe of the ſpring. If he himſelf were leſs clear-ſighted than he ſeems to be, to the beauties of his face and perſon, he could not alſo be deaf to the voices of the women, who break out into exclamations, in praiſe of both, as often as he appears in public. On a public occaſion, lately, as he was carried through a particular ſtreet, a young woman at a window exclaimed, "Quanto e "bello! O quanto e bello!" and was immediately anſwered by a zealous old lady at the window oppoſite, who, folding her hands in each other, and raiſing her eyes to heaven, cried out, with a mixture of love for his perſon, and veneration for his ſacred office, "Tanto e bello, "quanto e ſanto!" When we know that ſuch a quantity of incenſe is daily burnt under his ſacred noſtrils, we ought not to be aſtoniſhed, though we ſhould find his brain, on ſome occaſions, a little intoxicated.

Vanity is a very comfortable failing; and has ſuch an univerſal power over mankind, that not only the gay bloſſoms of youth, but even the

ſhrivelled boſom of age, and the contracted heart of bigotry, open, expand, and diſplay ſtrong marks of ſenſibility under its influence.

After maſs, the Pope gave the benediction to the people aſſembled in the Grand Court, before the church of St. Peter's. It was a remarkably fine day; an immenſe multitude filled that ſpacious and magnificent area; the horſe and foot guards were drawn up in their moſt ſhowy uniform. The Pope, ſeated in an open, portable chair, in all the ſplendour which his wardrobe could give, with the tiara on his head, was carried out of a large window, which opens on a balcony in the front of St. Peter's. The ſilk hangings and gold trappings with which the chair was embelliſhed, concealed the men who carried it; ſo that to thoſe who viewed him from the area below, his Holineſs ſeemed to ſail forward, from the window ſelf-balanced in the air, like a celeſtial being. The inſtant he appeared, the muſic ſtruck up, the bells rung from every church, and the cannon thundered from the caſtle of St. Angelo in repeated peals. During the intervals, the church of St. Peter's, the palace of the Vatican, and the banks of the Tiber, re-echoed the acclamations of the populace. At length his Holineſs aroſe from his ſeat, and an immediate and awful ſilence enſued. The multitude fell upon their knees, with their hands and eyes raiſed towards his Holineſs, as to a benign Deity. After a ſolemn pauſe, he pronounced

the benediction, with great fervour; elevating his outſtretched arms as high as he could; then cloſing them together, and bringing them back to his breaſt with a ſlow motion, as if he had got hold of the bleſſing, and was drawing it gently from heaven. Finally, he threw his arms open, waving them for ſome time, as if his intention had been to ſcatter the benediction with impartiality among the people.

No ceremony can be better calculated for ſtriking the ſenſes, and impoſing on the underſtanding, than this of the Supreme Pontiff giving the bleſſing from the balcony of St. Peter's. For my own part, if I had not, in my early youth, received impreſſions highly unfavourable to the chief actor in this magnificent interlude, I ſhould have been in danger of paying him a degree of reſpect, very inconſiſtent with the religion in which I was educated.

LETTER L.

Rome.

IN my laſt, I informed you of my having been ſeduced almoſt into idolatry, by the influence of example, and the pomp which ſurrounded the idol. I muſt now confeſs that I have actually bowed the knee to Baal, from mere wantonneſs. We are told that, to draw near to that Being, who ought to be the only object of worſhip, with our lips, while our hearts is far from him, is a mockery. Such daring and abſurd hypocriſy I ſhall always avoid: but to have drawn near to *him*, who ought not to be an object of worſhip, with the lips only, while the heart continued at a diſtance, I hope will be conſidered as no more than a venial tranſgreſſion. In ſhort, I truſt, that it will not be looked on as a mortal ſin in Proteſtants to have kiſſed the Pope's toe. If it ſhould, ſome of your friends are in a deplorable way, as you ſhall hear.—It is uſual for ſtrangers to be preſented to his Holineſs before they leave Rome. The D— of H——, Mr. K——, and myſelf, have all been at the Vatican together, upon that important buſineſs. Your young acquaintance Jack, who, having now got a commiſſion in the army, conſiders himſelf no longer as

a boy, desired to accompany us. We went under the auspices of a certain ecclesiastic, who usually attends the English on such occasions.

He very naturally concluded, that it would be most agreeable to us to have the circumstance of kissing the slipper dispensed with. Having had some conversation, therefore, with his Holiness, in his own apartment, while we remained in another room, previous to our introduction; he afterwards returned, and informed us, that the Pontiff, indulgent to the prejudices of the British nation, did not insist on that part of the ceremonial; and therefore a very low bow, on our being presented, was all that would be required of us.

A bow! cried the D— of H——; I should not have given myself any trouble about the matter, had I suspected that all was to end in a bow. I look on kissing the toe as the only amusing circumstance of the whole; if that is to be omitted, I will not be introduced at all. For if the most ludicrous part is left out, who would wait for the rest of a farce?

This was a thunderstroke to our negociator, who expected thanks, at least, for the honourable terms he had obtained; but who, on the contrary, found himself in the same disagreeable predicament with other negociators, who have met with abuse and reproach from their countrymen,

on account of treaties for which they expected univerſal applauſe.

The D— of H—— knew nothing of the treaty which our introducer had juſt concluded; otherwiſe he would certainly have prevented the negociation. As I perceived, however, that our ambaſſador was mortified with the thoughts that all his labour ſhould prove abortive, I ſaid, that, although he had prevailed with his Holineſs to wave that part of the ceremonial, which his Grace thought ſo entertaining, yet it would unqueſtionably be ſtill more agreeable to him that the whole ſhould be performed to its utmoſt extent: this new arrangement, therefore, needed not be an obſtruction to our being preſented.

The countenance of our Conductor brightened up at this propoſal. He immediately uſhered us into the preſence of the Supreme Pontiff. We all bowed to the ground; the ſuppleſt of the company had the happineſs to touch the ſacred ſlipper with their lips, and the leaſt agile were within a few inches of that honour. As this was more than had been bargained for, his Holineſs ſeemed agreeably ſurpriſed; raiſed the D— with a ſmiling countenance, and converſed with him in an obliging manner, aſking the common queſtions, How long he had been in Italy? Whether he found Rome agreeable? When he intended to ſet out for Naples?—He ſaid ſomething of the ſame kind to each of the company;

and, after about a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes, we took our leave.

Next day, his Holineſs ſent his compliments to the D—, with a preſent of two medals, one of gold, and the other of ſilver; on both of which the head of the Pontiff is very accurately engraved.

The manner in which the generality of ſovereign princes paſs their time, is as far from being amuſing or agreeable, as one can poſſibly imagine. Slaves to the tireſome routine of etiquette; martyrs to the oppreſſive fatigue of pomp; conſtrained to walk every levee-day around the ſame dull circle, to gratify the vanity of fifty or a hundred people, by whiſpering a ſomething or a nothing into the ears of each; obliged to wear a ſmiling countenance, even when the heart is oppreſſed with ſadneſs; beſieged by the craving faces of thoſe, who are more diſpleaſed at what is with-held, than grateful for the favours they have received; ſurrounded, as he conſtantly is, by adepts in the art of ſimulation, all profeſſing the higheſt poſſible regard; how ſhall the puzzled monarch diſtinguiſh real from aſſumed attachment? and what a riſk does he run, of placing his confidence where he ought to have directed his indignation! And, to all theſe inconveniencies, when we add this, that he is precluded from thoſe delightful ſenſations which ſpring from diſintereſted friendſhip, ſweet equality,

and the gay, careleſs enjoyments of ſocial life, we muſt acknowledge, that all that is brilliant in the condition of a ſovereign, is not ſufficient to compenſate for ſuch reſtraints, ſuch dangers, and ſuch deprivations.

So far indeed are we from conſidering that envied condition as enviable, that great part of mankind are more apt to think it inſupportable; and are ſurpriſed to find, that thoſe unhappy men, whom fate has condemned to ſuffer the pains of royalty for life, are able to wait with patience for the natural period of their days. For, ſtrange as it may appear, hiſtory does not furniſh us with an inſtance, not even in Great Britain itſelf, of a king, who hanged, or drowned, or put himſelf to death in any other violent manner, from mere tædium, as other mortals, diſguſted with life, are apt to do. I was at a loſs to account for ſuch an extraordinary fact, till I recollected that, however void of reſources and activity the minds of monarchs may be, they are ſeldom allowed to reſt in repoſe. The ſtorms to which people in their lofty ſituation are expoſed, occaſion ſuch agitations as prevent the ſtagnating ſlime of tædium from gathering on their minds. That kings do not commit ſuicide, therefore, affords only a very ſlender preſumption of the happineſs of their condition: although it is a ſtrong proof, that all the hurricanes of life are not ſo inſupportable to the human mind, as that inſipid, fearleſs, hopeleſs

calm, which envelopes men who are devoid of mental enjoyments, and whoſe ſenſes are palled with ſatiety. If there is any truth in the above repreſentation of the regal condition, would not you imagine that of all others it would be the moſt ſhunned? Would not you imagine that every human being would ſhrink from it, as from certain miſery; and that at leaſt every wiſe man would ſay, with the Poet,

I envy none their pageantry and ſhow,
I envy none the gilding of their woe?

Not only every wiſe man, but every fooliſh man, will adopt the ſentiment, and act accordingly; provided his rank in life removes him from the poſſibility of ever attaining the objects in queſtion. For what is ſituated beyond the ſphere of our hopes, very ſeldom excites our deſires; but bring the powerful magnets a little nearer, and they attract the human paſſions with a force which reaſon and philoſophy cannot controul. Placed within their reach, the wiſe and the fooliſh graſp with equal eagerneſs at crowns and ſceptres, in ſpite of all the thorns with which they are ſurrounded. Their alluring magic ſeems to have the power of changing the very characters and natures of men. In purſuit of them, the indolent have been excited to the moſt active exertions, the voluptuous have renounced their darling pleaſures; and even thoſe who have long walked in the direct road of integrity, have

deviated into all the crooked paths of villany and fraud.

There are paſſions, whoſe indulgence is ſo exceedingly flattering to the natural vanity of men, that they will gratify them, though perſuaded that the gratification will be attended by diſappointment and miſery. The love of power and ſovereignty is of this claſs. It has been a general belief, ever ſince the kingly office was eſtabliſhed among men, that cares and anxiety were the conſtant attendants of royalty. Yet this general conviction never made a ſingle perſon decline an opportunity of embarking on this ſea of troubles. Every new adventurer flatters himſelf that he ſhall be guided by ſome happy ſtar undiſcovered by former navigators; and thoſe who, after trial, have relinquiſhed the voyage—Charles, Chriſtina, Amadeus, and others—when they had quitted the helm, and were ſafely arrived in port, are ſaid to have languiſhed all the reſt of their lives, for that ſituation which their own experience taught them was fraught with miſery.

Henry the Fourth of England did not arrive at the throne by the natural and direct road. Shakeſpeare puts the following Addreſs to Sleep, into the mouth of this monarch:

——— O Sleep! O gentle Sleep!
Nature's ſoft nurſe, how have I frighted thee,
That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down,
And ſteep my ſenſes in forgetfulneſs?

Why rather, Sleep, lieſt thou in ſmoky cribs,
Upon uneaſy pallets ſtretching thee,
And huſh'd with buſy night-flies to thy ſlumber;
Than in the perfum'd chambers of the Great,
Under the canopies of coſtly ſtate,
And lull'd with ſounds of ſweeteſt melody?
O thou dull God! why ly'ſt thou with the vile
In loathſome beds; and leav'ſt the kingly couch?
A watch-caſe, or a common 'larum bell?
Wilt thou, upon the high and giddy maſt,
Seal up the ſhip-boy's eyes, and rock his brains
In cradle of the rude imperious ſurge;
And in the viſitation of the winds,———
Who take the ruffian billows by the top,
Curling their monſtrous heads, and hanging them
With deaf'ning clamours in the ſlipp'ry ſhrouds,—
Canſt thou, O partial Sleep! give thy repoſe
To the wet ſea-boy in an hour ſo rude;
And, in the calmeſt and moſt ſtilleſt night,
With all appliances and means to boot,
Deny it to a King?

However eager and impatient this Prince may have formerly been to obtain the crown, you would conclude that he was quite cloyed by poſſeſſion at the time he made this ſpeech; and therefore, at firſt ſight, you would not expect that he ſhould afterwards diſplay any exceſſive attachment to what gives him ſo much uneaſineſs. But Shakeſpeare, who knew the ſecret wiſhes, perverſe deſires, and ſtrange inconſiſtencies of the human heart, better than man ever knew them, makes this very Henry ſo tenaciouſly fond of that which he himſelf conſidered as the cauſe

of all his inquietude, that he cannot bear to have the crown one moment out of his ſight, but orders it to be placed on his pillow when he lies on his death-bed.

Of all diadems, the Tiara, in my opinion, has the feweſt charms; and nothing can afford a ſtronger proof of the ſtrength and perſeverance of man's paſſion for ſovereign power, than our knowledge, that even this eccleſiaſtical crown is ſought after with as much eagerneſs, perhaps with more than any other crown in the world, although the candidates are generally in the decline of life, and all of a profeſſion which avows the moſt perfect contempt of worldly grandeur. This appears the more wonderful when we reflect, that, over and above thoſe ſources of wearineſs and vexation, which the Pope has in common with other ſovereigns, he has ſome which are peculiar to himſelf.—The tireſome religious functions which he muſt perform, the ungenial ſolitude of his meals, the excluſion of the company and converſation of women, reſtriction from the tendereſt and moſt delightful connexions in life, from the endearments of a parent, and the *open acknowledgment* of his own children; his mind oppreſſed with the gloomy reflection, that the man for whom he has the leaſt regard, perhaps his greateſt enemy, may be his immediate ſucceſſor; to which is added, the pain of ſeeing his influence, both ſpiritual and temporal, declining every day; and the mortification of knowing,

that all his ancient lofty pretenſions are laughed at by one half of the Roman Catholics, all the Proteſtants, and totally diſregarded by the reſt of mankind. I know of nothing which can be put in the other ſcale to balance all thoſe peculiar diſadvantages which his Holineſs labours under, unleſs it is the ſingular felicity which he lawfully may, and no doubt does enjoy, in the contemplation of his own infallibility.

LETTER LI.

Rome.

IN their external deportment, the Italians have a grave ſolemnity of manner, which is ſometimes thought to ariſe from a natural gloomineſs of diſpoſition. The French, above all other nations, are apt to impute to melancholy, the ſedate ſerious air which accompanies reflection.

Though in the pulpit, on the theatre, and even in common converſation, the Italians make uſe of a great deal of action; yet Italian vivacity is different from French; the former proceeds from ſenſibility, the latter from animal ſpirits.

The inhabitants of this country have not the briſk look, and elaſtic trip, which is univerſal in France; they move rather with a ſlow compoſed pace: their ſpines never having been forced into a ſtraight line, retain the natural bend; and the people of the moſt finiſhed faſhion, as well as the neglected vulgar, ſeem to prefer the unconſtrained attitude of the Antinous, and other antique ſtatues, to the artificial graces of a French dancing-maſter, or the erect ſtrut of a

German ſoldier. I imagine I perceive a great reſemblance between many of the living countenances I ſee daily, and the features of the ancient buſts and ſtatues; which leads me to believe, that there are a greater number of the genuine deſcendants of the old Romans in Italy, than is generally imagined.

I am often ſtruck with the fine character of countenance to be ſeen in the ſtreets of Rome. I never ſaw features more expreſſive of reflection, ſenſe, and genius: in the very loweſt ranks there are countenances which announce minds fit for the higheſt and moſt important ſituations; and we cannot help regretting, that thoſe to whom they belong, have not received an education adequate to the natural abilities we are convinced they poſſeſs, and placed where theſe abilities could be brought into action.

Of all the countries in Europe, Switzerland is that in which the beauties of nature appear in the greateſt variety of forms, and on the moſt magnificent ſcale; in that country, therefore, the young landſcape painter has the beſt chance of ſeizing the moſt ſublime ideas: but Italy is the beſt ſchool for the hiſtory painter, not only on account of its being enriched with the works of the greateſt maſters, and the nobleſt models of antique ſculpture; but alſo on account of the fine expreſſive ſtyle of the Italian countenance. Here you have few or none of thoſe fair, fat,

gliſtening, unmeaning faces, ſo common in the more northern parts of Europe. I happened once to ſit by a foreigner of my acquaintance at the Opera in the Hay-market, when a certain Nobleman, who at that time was a good deal talked of, entered. I whiſpered him—"That "is Lord ——." "Not ſurely the famous "Lord ——," ſaid he. "Yes," ſaid I, "the "very ſame." "It muſt be acknowledged "then," continued he, "that the noble Earl "does infinite honour to thoſe who have had "the care of his education." "How ſo?" rejoined I. "Becauſe," replied the foreigner, "a countenance ſo completely vacant, ſtrongly "indicates a deficiency of natural abilities; the "reſpectable figure he makes in the ſenate, I "therefore preſume muſt be entirely owing to "inſtruction."

Strangers, on their arrival at Rome, form no high idea of the beauty of the Roman women, from the ſpecimens they ſee in the faſhionable circles to which they are firſt introduced. There are ſome exceptions; but in general it muſt be acknowledged, that the preſent race of women of high rank, are more diſtinguiſhed by their other ornaments, than by their beauty. Among the citizens, however, and in the lower claſſes, you frequently meet with the moſt beautiful countenances. For a brilliant red and white, and all the charms of complexion, no women are equal to the Engliſh. If a hundred, or any

greater number, of Engliſh women were taken at random, and compared with the ſame number of the wives and daughters of the citizens of Rome, I am convinced, that ninety of the Engliſh would be found handſomer than ninety of the Romans; but the probability is, that two or three in the hundred Italians, would have finer countenances than any of the Engliſh. Engliſh beauty is more remarkable in the country, than in towns; the peaſantry of no country in Europe can ſtand a compariſon, in point of looks, with thoſe of England. That race of people have the conveniencies of life in no other country in ſuch perfection; they are no where ſo well fed, ſo well defended from the injuries of the ſeaſons; and no where elſe do they keep themſelves ſo perfectly clean, and free from all the vilifying effects of dirt. The Engliſh country girls, taken collectively, are, unqueſtionably, the handſomeſt in the world. The female peaſants of moſt other countries, indeed, are ſo hard worked, ſo ill fed, ſo much tanned by the ſun, and ſo dirty, that it is difficult to know whether they have any beauty or not. Yet I have been informed, by ſome Amateurs, ſince I came here, that, in ſpite of all theſe diſadvantages, they ſometimes find, among the Italian peaſantry, countenances highly intereſting, and which they prefer to all the cherry cheeks of Lancaſhire.

Beauty, doubtleſs, is infinitely varied; and happily for mankind, their taſtes and opinions,

on the ſubject, are equally various. Notwithſtanding this variety, however, a ſtyle of face, in ſome meaſure peculiar to its own inhabitants, has been found to prevail in each different nation of Europe. This peculiar countenance is again greatly varied, and marked with every degree of diſcrimination between the extremes of beauty and uglineſs. I will give you a ſketch of the general ſtyle of the moſt beautiful female heads in this country, from which you may judge whether they are to your taſte or not.

A great profuſion of dark hair, which ſeems to encroach upon the forehead, rendering it ſhort and narrow; the noſe generally either aquiline, or continued in a ſtraight line from the lower part of the brow; a full and ſhort upper lip; by the way, nothing has a worſe effect on a countenance, than a large interval between the noſe and mouth; the eyes are large, and of a ſparkling black. The black eye certainly labours under one diſadvantage, which is, that, from the iris and pupil being of the ſame colour, the contraction and dilatation of the latter is not ſeen, by which the eye is abridged of half its powers. Yet the Italian eye is wonderful expreſſive; ſome people think it ſays too much. The complexion, for the moſt part, is of a clear brown, ſometimes fair, but very ſeldom florid, or of that bright fairneſs which is common in England and Saxony. It muſt be owned, that thoſe features which have a fine

expreſſion of ſentiment and meaning in youth, are more apt, than leſs expreſſive faces, to become ſoon ſtrong and maſculine. In England and Germany, the women, a little advanced in life, retain the appearance of youth longer than in Italy.

With countenances ſo favourable for the pencil, you will naturally imagine, that portrait painting is in the higheſt perfection here. The reverſe, however, of this is true; that branch of the art is in the loweſt eſtimation all over Italy. In palaces, the beſt furniſhed with pictures, you ſeldom ſee a portrait of the proprietor, or any of his family. A quarter length of the reigning Pope is ſometimes the only portrait, of a living perſon, to be ſeen in the whole palace. Several of the Roman Princes affect to have a room of ſtate, or audience chamber, in which is a raiſed ſeat like a throne, with a canopy over it. In thoſe rooms the effigies of the Pontiffs are hung; they are the work of very inferior artiſts, and ſeldom coſt above three or four ſequins. As ſoon as his Holineſs departs this life, the portrait diſappears, and the face of his ſucceſſor is in due time hung up in its ſtead. This, you will ſay, is treating their old ſovereign a little unkindly, and paying no very expenſive compliment to the new; it is not ſo œconomical, however, as what was practiſed by a certain perſon. I ſhall not inform you whether he was a Frenchman or an Engliſhman, but he

certainly was a courtier, and profeſſed the higheſt poſſible regard for all living monarchs; but conſidered them as no better than any other piece of clay when dead. He had a full length picture of his own Sovereign in the principal room of his houſe; on his majeſty's death, to ſave himſelf the expence of a freſh body, and a new ſuit of ermine, he employed a painter to bruſh out the face and periwig, and clap the new King's head on his grandfather's ſhoulders; which, he declared, were in the moſt perfect preſervation, and fully able to wear out three or four ſuch heads as painters uſually give in theſe degenerate days.

The Italians, in general, very ſeldom take the trouble of ſitting for their pictures. They conſider a portrait as a piece of painting, which engages the admiration of nobody but the perſon it repreſents, or the painter who drew it. Thoſe who are in circumſtances to pay the beſt artiſts, generally employ them in ſome ſubject more univerſally intereſting, than the repreſentation of human countenances ſtaring out of a piece of canvas.

Pompeio Battoni is the beſt Italian painter now at Rome. His taſte and genius led him to hiſtory painting, and his reputation was originally acquired in that line; but by far the greater part of his fortune, whatever that may be, has flowed through a different channel. His chief

employment, for many years paſt, has been painting the portraits of the young Engliſh, and other ſtrangers of fortune, who viſit Rome. There are artiſts in England, ſuperior in this, and every other branch of painting, to Battoni. They, like him, are ſeduced from the free walks of genius, and chained, by intereſt, to the ſervile drudgery of copying faces. Beauty is worthy of the moſt delicate pencil; but, gracious heaven! why ſhould every periwig-pated fellow, without countenance or character, inſiſt on ſeeing his chubby cheeks on canvas?

"Could you not give a little expreſſion to "that countenance?" ſaid a gentleman to an eminent Engliſh painter, who ſhowed him a portrait which he had juſt finiſhed. "I made "that attempt already," replied the painter; "but what the picture gained in expreſſion, is "loſt in likeneſs; and by the time there was "a little common ſenſe in the countenance, "nobody knew for whom it was intended. I "was obliged, therefore, to make an entire new "picture, with the face perfectly like, and per-"fectly meaningleſs, as you ſee it."

Let the colours for ever remain, which record the laſt fainting efforts of Chatham; the expiring triumph of Wolf; or the indeciſion of Garrick, equally allured by the two contending Muſes! But let them periſh and fly from the canvas, which blind ſelf-love ſpreads for inſipidity

and uglineſs! Why ſhould poſterity know, that the firſt genius of the age, and thoſe whoſe pencils were formed to ſpeak to the heart, and delineate beauteous Nature, were chiefly employed in copying faces? and many of them, faces that imitate humanity ſo abominably, that, to uſe Hamlet's expreſſion, they ſeem not the genuine work of Nature, but of Nature's journeymen.

To this ridiculous ſelf-love, equally prevalent among the great, vulgar and ſmall, ſome of the beſt painters in France, Germany, and Great-Britain, are obliged for their ſubſiſtence. This creates a ſuſpicion, that a taſte for the real beauties of painting, is not quite ſo univerſal, as a ſenſibility to their own perſonal beauties, among the individuals of theſe countries. And nothing can be a ſtronger proof of the important light in which men appear in their own eyes, and their ſmall importance in thoſe of others, than the different treatment which the generality of portraits receive, during the life, and after the death, of their conſtituents. During the firſt of theſe periods, they inhabit the fineſt apartments of the houſes to which they belong; they are flattered by the gueſts, and always viewed with an eye of complacency by the landlord. But, after the commencement of the ſecond, they begin to be neglected; in a ſhort time are ignominiouſly thruſt up to the garret; and, to fill up the meaſure of their affliction, they finally are thrown out of doors, in the moſt barbarous

manner, without distinction of rank, age, or sex. Those of former times are scattered, like Jews, with their long beards and brown complexions, all over the face of the earth; and, even of the present century, Barons of the most ancient families, arm cap-a-pee, are to be purchased for two or three ducats, in most of the towns of Germany. French Marquises, in full suits of embroidered velvet, may be had at Paris still cheaper; and many worshipful citizens of London are to be seen dangling on the walls of an auction-room, when they are scarce cold in their graves.

LETTER LII.

Rome.

THERE are no theatrical entertainments permitted in this city, except during the Carnival; but they are then attended with a degree of ardour unknown in capitals whoſe inhabitants are under no ſuch reſtraint. Every kind of amuſement, indeed, in this gay ſeaſon, is followed with the greateſt eagerneſs. The natural gravity of the Roman citizens is changed into a mirthful vivacity; and the ſerious, ſombre city of Rome exceeds Paris itſelf in ſprightlineſs and gaiety. This ſpirit ſeems gradually to augment, from its commencement; and is at its height in the laſt week of the ſix which comprehend the Carnival. The citizens then appear in the ſtreets, maſked, in the characters of Harlequins, Pantaloons, Punchinellos, and all the fantaſtic variety of a maſquerade. This humour ſpreads to men, women, and children; deſcends to the loweſt ranks, and becomes univerſal. Even thoſe who put on no maſk, and have no deſire to remain unknown, reject their uſual clothes, and aſſume ſome whimſical dreſs. The coachmen, who are placed in a more conſpicuous point of view than others of the ſame

rank in life, and who are perfectly known by the carriages they drive, generally affect ſome ridiculous diſguiſe: Many of them chuſe a woman's dreſs, and have their faces painted, and adorned with patches. However dull theſe fellows may be, when in breeches, they are, in petticoats, conſidered as the pleaſanteſt men in the world; and excite much laughter in every ſtreet in which they appear. I obſerved to an Italian of my acquaintance, that, conſidering the ſtaleneſs of the yoke, I was ſurpriſed at the mirth it ſeemed to raiſe. "When a whole ci-"ty," anſwered he, "are reſolved to be merry "for a week together, it is exceedingly conve-"nient to have a few eſtabliſhed jokes ready "made; the young laugh at the novelty, and "the old from preſcription. This metamor-"phoſis of the coachmen is certainly not the "moſt refined kind of wit; however, it is more "harmleſs than the burning of heretics, which "formerly, was a great ſource of amuſement to "our populace."

The ſtreet, called the Corſo, is the great ſcene of theſe maſquerades. It is crowded every night with people of all conditions: Thoſe of rank come in coaches, or in open carriages, made on purpoſe. A kind of civil war is carried on by the company, as they paſs each other. The greateſt mark of attention you can ſhew your friends and acquaintance, is, to throw a handful of little white balls, reſembling ſugar-plums,

full in their faces; and, if they are not deficient in politeneſs, they will inſtantly return you the compliment. All who wiſh to make a figure in the Corſo, come well ſupplied with this kind of ammunition.

Sometimes two or three open carriages, on a ſide, with five or ſix perſons of both ſexes in each, draw up oppoſite to each other, and fight a pitched battle. On theſe occaſions, the combatants are provided with whole bags full of the ſmall ſhot above mentioned, which they throw at each other, with much apparent fury, till their ammunition is exhauſted, and the field of battle is as white as ſnow.

The peculiar dreſſes of every nation of the globe, and of every profeſſion, beſides all the fantaſtic characters uſual at maſquerades, are to be ſeen on the Corſo. Thoſe of Harlequin and Pantaloon are in great vogue among the men. The citizens wives and daughters generally affect the pomp of women of quality; while their brothers, or other relations, appear as train-bearers and attendants. In general, they ſeem to delight in characters the moſt remote from their own. Young people aſſume the long beard, tottering ſtep, and other concomitants of old age; the aged chuſe the bib and rattle of childhood; and the women of quality, and women of the town, appear in the characters of country maidens, nuns, and veſtal virgins. All

endeavour to ſupport the aſſumed characters, to the beſt of their ability; but none, in my opinion, ſucceed ſo well as thoſe who repreſent children.

Towards the duſk of the evening, the horſe-race takes place. As ſoon as this is announced, the coaches, cabriolets, triumphal cars, and carriages of every kind, are drawn up, and line the ſtreet; leaving a ſpace in the middle for the racers to paſs. Theſe are five or ſix horſes, trained on purpoſe for this diverſion; they are drawn up a-breaſt in the Piazza del Popolo, exactly where the Corſo begins. Certain balls, with little ſharp ſpikes, are hung along their ſides, which ſerve to ſpur them on. As ſoon as they begin to run, thoſe animals, by their impatience to be gone, ſhew that they underſtand what is required of them, and that they take as much pleaſure as the ſpectators in the ſport. A broad piece of canvas, ſpread acroſs the entrance of the ſtreet, prevents them from ſtarting too ſoon: the dropping that canvas is the ſignal for the race to begin. The horſes fly off together, and, without riders, exert themſelves to the utmoſt; impelled by emulation, the ſhouts of the populace, and the ſpurs above mentioned. They run the whole length of the Corſo; and the proprietor of the victor is rewarded by a certain quantity of fine ſcarlet or purple cloth, which is always furniſhed by the Jews.

This diverſion, ſuch as it is, ſeems highly entertaining to the Roman populace; though it appears a mighty fooliſh buſineſs in the eyes of Engliſhmen. An acquaintance of mine, who had entirely ruined a fine fortune at Newmarket, told me, that Italian horſe-races were the moſt abſurd things in the world; that there were not a hundred guineas loſt or won during a whole Carnival; and nothing could be a greater proof of the folly of the people, than their ſpending their time in ſuch a ſilly manner.

Maſking and horſe-races are confined to the laſt eight days; but there are theatrical entertainments, of various kinds, during the whole ſix weeks of the Carnival. The Serious Opera is moſt frequented by people of faſhion, who generally take boxes for the whole ſeaſon. The opera, with which this theatre opened, was received with the higheſt applauſe, though the muſic only was new. The Italians do not think it always neceſſary to compoſe new words for what is called a new opera; they often ſatisfy themſelves with new muſic to the affecting dramas of Metaſtaſio. The audience here ſeem to lend a more profound and continued attention to the muſic, than at Venice. This is probably owing to the entertainment being a greater rarity in the one city than in the other; for I could perceive that the people of faſhion, who came every night, began, after the opera had been repeated ſeveral nights, to abate in their attention,

to receive viſitors in their boxes, and to liſten only when ſome favourite airs were ſinging: whereas the audience in the pit uniformly preſerve the moſt perfect ſilence, which is only interrupted by gentle murmurs of pleaſure from a few individuals, or an univerſal burſt of applauſe from the whole aſſembly. I never ſaw ſuch genuine marks of ſatisfaction diſplayed by any aſſembly, on any occaſion whatever. The ſenſibility of ſome of the audience gave me an idea of the power of ſounds, which the dulneſs of my own auditory nerves could never have conveyed to my mind. At certain airs, ſilent enjoyment was expreſſed in every countenance; at others, the hands were claſped together, the eyes half ſhut, and the breath drawn in, with a prolonged ſigh, as if the ſoul was expiring in a torrent of delight. One young woman, in the pit, called out, "O Dio, dove ſono! che piacer via caccia "l'alma?"

On the firſt night of the opera, after one of theſe favourite airs, an univerſal ſhout of applauſe took place, intermingled with demands that the compoſer of the muſic ſhould appear. Il Maeſtro! il Maeſtro! reſounded from every corner of the houſe. He was preſent, and led the band of muſic; he was obliged to ſtand upon the bench, where he continued, bowing to the ſpectators, till they were tired of applauding him. One perſon, in the middle of the pit, whom I had remarked diſplaying great ſigns of ſatisfaction

from the beginning of the performance, cried out, "He deſerves to be made chief muſician "to the Virgin, and to lead a choir of angels." This expreſſion would be thought ſtrong, in any country; but it has peculiar energy here, where it is a popular opinion, that the Virgin Mary is very fond, and an excellent judge, of muſic. I received this information on Chriſtmas morning, when I was looking at two poor Calabrian pipers doing their utmoſt to pleaſe her, and the Infant in her arms. They played for a full hour to one of her images which ſtands at the corner of a ſtreet. All the other ſtatues of the Virgin, which are placed in the ſtreets, are ſerenaded in the ſame manner every Chriſtmas morning. On my enquiring into the meaning of that ceremony, I was told the above-mentioned circumſtance of her character, which, though you may have always thought highly probable, perhaps you never before knew for certain. My informer was a pilgrim, who ſtood liſtening with great devotion to the pipers. He told me, at the ſame time, that the Virgin's taſte was too refined to have much ſatisfaction in the performance of thoſe poor Calabrians, which was chiefly intended for the Infant; and he deſired me to remark, that the tunes were plain, ſimple, and ſuch as might naturally be ſuppoſed agreeable to the ear of a child of his time of life.

Though the ſerious opera is in higheſt eſtimation, and more regularly attended by people

of the firſt faſhion; yet the opera buffas, or burlettas, are not entirely neglected, even by them, and are crowded, every night, by the middle and lower claſſes. Some admired ſingers have performed there during the Carnival, and the muſical compoſers have rendered them highly pleaſing to the general taſte.

The ſerious and burleſque operas prevail infinitely over the other theatrical entertainments at Rome, in ſpite of the united efforts of Harlequin, Pantaloon, and Punchinello.

The prohibition of female performers renders the amuſement of the Roman theatre very inſipid, in the opinion of ſome unrefined Engliſhmen of your acquaintance who are here. In my own poor opinion, the natural ſweetneſs of the female voice is ill ſupplied by the artificial trills of wretched caſtratos; and the aukward agility of robuſt ſinewy fellows dreſſed in women's clothes, is a moſt deplorable ſubſtitution for the graceful movements of elegant female dancers. Is not the horrid practice which is encouraged by this manner of ſupplying the place of female ſingers, a greater outrage on religion and morality, than can be produced by the evils which their prohibition is intended to prevent? Is it poſſible to believe, that purity of ſentiment will be preſerved by producing eunuchs on the ſtage? I ſhould fear it would have a different effect. At the funeral of Junia, the wife of

Caſſius, and ſiſter of Brutus, the ſtatues of all the great perſons connected with her family by blood or alliance, were carried in proceſſion, except thoſe of her brother and huſband. This *deficiency* ſtruck the people more than any part of the proceſſion, and brought the two illuſtrious Romans into their minds with more force than if their ſtatues had been carried with the others.—Præfulgebant Caſſius atque Brutus, ſays Tacitus, eo ipſo, quod effigies eorum non viſebantur.

LETTER LIII.

Naples.

I TAKE the firſt opportunity of informing you of our arrival in this city. Some of the principal objects which occurred on the road, with the ſentiments they ſuggeſted to my mind, ſhall form the ſubject of this letter.

It is almoſt impoſſible to go out of the walls of Rome, without being impreſſed with melancholic ideas. Having left that city by St. John de Lateran's gate, we ſoon entered a ſpacious plain, and drove for ſeveral miles in ſight of ſepulchral monuments and the ruins of ancient aqueducts. Sixtus the Fifth repaired one of them, to bring water into that part of Rome where Diocleſian's baths formerly ſtood: this water is now called *aqua felice*, from Felix, the name of that pontiff, while he was only a Cordelier. Having changed horſes at the Torre de Mezzo Via, ſo called from an old tower near the poſt-houſe, we proceeded through a ſilent, deſerted, unwholeſome country. We ſcarce met a paſſenger between Rome and Marino, a little town about twelve miles from the former, which has its name from Caius Marius, who had

a villa there; it now belongs to the Colonna family. While freſh horſes were harneſſing, we viſited two churches, to ſee two pictures which we had heard commended; the ſubject of one is as diſagreeable, as that of the other is difficult to execute. The connoiſſeur who directed us to theſe pieces, told me, that the firſt, the flaying of St. Bartholomew, by Guercino, is in a great ſtyle, finely coloured, and the muſcles convulſed with pain in the ſweeteſt manner imaginable; he could have gazed at it for ever. "As for the other," added he "which repre-"ſents the Trinity, it is natural, well grouped, "and eaſily underſtood; and that is all that "can be ſaid for it."

From Marino, the road runs for ſeveral miles over craggy mountains. In aſcending Mons Albanus, we were charmed with a fine view of the country towards the ſea; Oſtia, Antium, the lake Albano, and the fields adjacent. The form and component parts of this mountain plainly ſhew, that it has formerly been a volcano. The lake of Nemi, which we left to the right, ſeems, like that of Albano, to have been formed in the cavity of a crater.

We came next to Veletri, an inconſiderable town, ſituated on a hill. There is one palace here, with ſpacious gardens, which, when kept in repair, may have been magnificent. The ſtair-caſe, they aſſured us, is ſtill worthy of

admiration. The inhabitants of Valetri aſſert, that Auguſtus was born there. Suetonius ſays, he was born at Rome. It is certainly of no importance where he was born. Perhaps it would have been better for Rome, and for the world in general, that he never had been born at all. The Valetrians are ſo fond of emperors, that they claim a connection even with Tiberius and Caligula, who had villas in their neighbourhood. The ruins of Otho's palace are ſtill to be ſeen about a mile from this city, at a place called Colle Ottone. Of thoſe four emperors, the laſt-mentioned was by much the beſt worth the claiming as a countryman. As for Caligula, he was a miſchievous madman. Tiberius ſeems to have been born with wicked diſpoſitions, which he improved by art. Auguſtus was naturally wicked, and artificially virtuous; and Otho ſeems to have been exactly the reverſe. Though educated in the moſt vicious of courts, and the favourite and companion of Nero, he ſtill preſerved, in ſome degree, the original excellence of his character; and, at his death, diſplayed a magnanimity of ſentiment, and nobleneſs of conduct, of which the highly flattered Auguſtus was never capable. "Alii diutius "imperium tenuerint," ſays Tacitus; "nemo "tam fortiter reliquerit." Convinced that, if he continued the Conteſt with Vitellius, all the horrors of a civil war would be prolonged, he determined to ſacrifice his life to the quiet of

his country, and to the ſafety of his friends *. "To involve you in freſh calamities," ſaid this generous prince to the officers who offered ſtill to ſupport his cauſe, "is purchaſing life at a "price beyond what, in my opinion, is its "value. Shall Roman armies be led againſt "each other, and the Roman youth be excited "to mutual ſlaughter, on my account? No! "for your ſafety, and to prevent ſuch evils, I "die contented. Let me be no impediment to "your treating with the enemy; nor do you "any longer oppoſe my fixed reſolution. I "complain not of my fate, nor do I accuſe any "body. To arraign the conduct of gods or "men, is natural to thoſe only who wiſh to "live."

Though they are not to be compared in other reſpects, yet the death of Otho may vie with that of Cato; and is one of ſtrongeſt inſtances to be found in hiſtory, that a life of effeminacy and voluptuouſneſs does not always eradicate the ſeeds of virtue and benevolence.

In the middle of the ſquare of Viletri, is a bronze ſtatue of Urban the Eighth. I think they told us it is the workmanſhip of Bernini.

* Hunc animum, hanc virtutem veſtram, ultra periculis objicere, nimis grande vitæ meæ pretium puto. An ego tantum Romanæ pubis, tot egregios exercitus, ſterni rurſus et republicâ eripi patiar? Eſte ſuperſtites, nec diu moremur; ego incolumitatem veſtram, vos conſtantiam meam. De nemine queror, nam incuſare deos vel homines, ejus eſt, qui vivere velit.

TACIT. Hiſt. lib. ii.

Deſcending from that town by a rough road, bordered by vineyards and fruit-trees, we traverſed an unſalubrious plain to Sermonetta; between which, and the poſt-houſe, called Caſa Nuova, a little to the left of the highway, are ſome vaults and ruins, not greatly worthy of the notice of the mere antiquarian. Yet paſſengers of a ſingular caſt of mind, who feel themſelves as much intereſted in the tranſactions recorded in the New Teſtament, as men of taſte are in paintings or heathen antiquities, ſtop a little here to contemplate the *Tres Tabernæ*, which are ſaid to be the three Taverns mentioned in the Acts of the Apoſtles, where the Chriſtian brethren from Rome came to meet St. Paul, when he was on his journey to that city. I have ſeen, however, ſome chriſtian travellers, who, without being connoiſſeurs, were of opinion, that old ruined houſes derived little value from the circumſtance above mentioned, and who preferred a good modern inn to all the antiquities, ſacred or profane, that they met with on their grand tours. Without preſuming to blame any ſet of men for their particular taſte, I may venture to ſay, that a traveller, who loves always to ſee a well-peopled and well-cultivated country, who inſiſts on good eating every day, and a neat comfortable bed every night, would judge very wiſely in never travelling out of England——I am certain he ought not to travel between Rome and Naples; for on this road, eſpecially the part which runs through the Eccleſiaſtical State, the

traveller's chief entertainment muſt ariſe from a leſs ſubſtantial foundation; from the ideas formed in the mind, at ſight of places celebrated by favourite authors; from a recollection of the important ſcenes which have been acted there; and even from the thought of treading the ſame ground, and viewing the ſame objects, with certain perſons who lived there fifteen hundred or two thouſand years ago. Strangers, therefore, who come under the firſt deſcription, whoſe ſenſes are far more powerful than their fancy, when they are ſo ill adviſed as to come ſo far from home, generally make this journey in very ill humour, fretting at Italian beds, fuming againſt Italian cooks, and execrating every poor little Italian flea that they meet with on the road. But he who can put up with indifferent fare cheerfully, whoſe ſerenity of temper remains unſhaken by the aſſaults of a flea, and who can draw amuſement from the ſtores of memory and imagination, will find the powers of both wonderfully excited during this journey. Sacred hiſtory unites with profane, truth conſpires with fable, to afford him entertainment, and render every object intereſting.

Proxima Circeæ raduntur littora terræ.

Driving along this road, you have a fine view of Monte Circello, and

——— the Æan bay,
Where Circe dwelt, the daughter of the Day;

Goddeſs and queen, to whom the powers belong
Of dreadful magic and commanding ſong.

This abode of the enchantreſs Circe has been generally deſcribed as an iſland; whereas it is, in reality, a promontory, united to the continent by a neck of land. The adventures of Ulyſſes and his companions at this place, with all the extraordinary things which Homer has recorded of Circe, muſt ſerve to amuſe you between Caſa Nuova and Piperno; the road affords no other.

At Piperno, anciently Privernum, you quit Circe, for Virgil's Camilla, a lady of a very different character, whoſe native city this is *.

Near to Piperno, an abbey, called Foſſa Nuova, is ſituated on the ruins of the little town of Forum Appii, the ſame of which mention is made in the Acts of the Apoſtles, and by Horace, in his account of his journey to Brunduſium.

——— Inde Forum Appi
Differtum nautis, cauponibus atque malignis.

The abbey of Foſſa Nuova is ſaid to have made a very valuable acquiſition of late, no leſs

* Hos ſuper advenit Volſcâ de gente Camilla,
Agmen agens equitum et florentes ære catervas,
Bellatrix: Non illa colo calathiſve Minervæ
Fœmineas aſſueta manus; ſed prœlia virgo
Dura pati, curſuque pedum prævertere ventos.
ÆNEID. lib. vii.

than the head of St. Thomas Aquinas. We are told, in the memoirs of that Saint, that he was taken ill as he paſſed this way, and was carried to this convent, where he died. His body was afterward required by the king of France, and ordered to be carried to Thouloufe; but before the remains of this holy perſon were removed from the convent, one of the monks, unwilling to allow the whole of ſuch a precious depoſite to be carried away, determined to retain the moſt valuable part, and actually cut off the ſaint's head, ſubſtituting another in its ſtead, which was carried to Thouloufe, very nicely ſtitched to the body of the ſaint. The monk, who was guilty of this pious fraud, hid the true head in the wall of the convent, and died without revealing the ſecret to any mortal. From that time the ſuppoſititious head remained unſuſpected at Thouloufe; but as impoſtures are generally detected ſooner or later, the venerable brethren of Foſſa Nuova (this happened much about the time that the Cock-lane ghoſt made ſuch a noiſe in London) were diſturbed with ſtrange knockings and ſcratchings at a particular part of the wall.—On this noiſe being frequently repeated, without any viſible agent, and the people of the neighbourhood having been often aſſembled to hear it, the monks at length agreed to pull down part of the wall at the place where the ſcratching and knocking were always heard. This was no ſooner done, than the true head of St. Thomas Aquinas was

found as freſh as the day it was cut off; ——on the veſſel in which it was contained was the following inſcription:

Caput divi Thomæ Aquinatis.

And near it a paper, containing a faithful narrative of the whole tranſaction, ſigned by the monk who did the deed.

Some people, not making a proper allowance for the difference between a ſaint's head and their own, ſay, this cannot poſſibly be the head of Thomas Aquinas, which muſt have putrified ſome centuries ago; they ſay, the Paper is written in a character by much too modern; they ſay, the monks contrived the whole affair, to give an importance to their convent; they ſay—but what ſignifies what they ſay? In this age of incredulity, ſome people will ſay any thing. We next came to Terracina, and here I muſt finiſh my letter; in my next I ſhall carry you to Naples.

LETTER LIV.

Naples.

TERRACINA, formerly called Anxur, was the capital of the warlike Volſci *. The principal church was originally a temple of Jupiter, who was ſuppoſed to have a partiality for this town, and the country around it. Virgil calls him Jupiter Anxurus. Enumerating the troops who came to ſupport the cauſe of Turnus, he mentions thoſe who plough the Rutulian hills:

Circeumque jugum; queis Jupiter Anxurus arvis
Præſidet, et viridi gaudens Feronia luco:
Qua ſaturæ jacet atra palus, &c.

Near this place we fell in again with the Appian Way, and beheld, with aſtoniſhment, the depth of rock that has here been cut, to render it more convenient for paſſengers. This famous road is a paved cauſeway, begun in the year of Rome 441, by Appius Claudius Cæcus the Cenſor, and carried all the way from Rome to Capua. It would be ſuperfluous to inſiſt on

* Anxur fuit quæ nunc Terracinæ ſunt; urbs prona in paludes. TIT. LIV. lib. iv.

the ſubſtantial manner in which it has been originally made, ſince it ſtill remains in many places. Though travellers are now obliged to make a circuit by Caſa Nuova and Piperno, the Via Appia was originally made in a ſtraight line through the Palude Pontine, or Palus Pomptina, as that vaſt marſh was anciently called: it is the Ater Palus above mentioned, in the lines quoted from Virgil. That part of the Appian road is now quite impaſſable, from the augmentation of this noxious marſh, whoſe exhalations are diſagreeable to paſſengers, and near which it is dangerous to ſleep a ſingle night.

Keyſler and ſome others ſay, that Appius made this road at his own expence. I do not know on what authority they make this aſſertion; but, whatever their authority may be, the thing is incredible. Could a Roman citizen, at a period when the inhabitants of Rome were not rich, bear an expence which we are ſurpriſed that even the State itſelf could ſupport? Though this famous road has received its name from Appius, I can hardly imagine it was completed by him. The diſtance from Rome to Capua is above one hundred and thirty miles; a prodigious length for ſuch a road as this to have been made, during the ſhort courſe of one Cenſorſhip; for a man could be Cenſor only once in his life. This was an office of very great dignity; no perſon could enjoy it till he had previouſly been Conſul. It was originally held for

five years; but, a hundred years before the time of Appius, the term was abridged to eighteen months. He, however, who, as Livy tells us, poſſeſſed all the pride and obſtinacy of his family, refuſed to quit the Cenſorſhip at the end of that period; and, in ſpite of all the efforts of the Tribunes, continued three years and a half beyond the term to which the office had been reſtricted by the Æmilian Law. But even five years is a very ſhort time for ſo great a work; yet this was not the only work he carried on during his Cenſorſhip. "Viam muni-"vit," ſays the Hiſtorian, "et aquam in urbem "duxit." The Appian road was carried on, afterwards, from Capua to Brunduſium, and was probably completed ſo far, in the time of Horace; as appears by this verſe, in one of his Epiſtles addreſſed to Lollius:

Brunduſium Numici melius via ducat, an Appi.

Terracina is the laſt town of the Eccleſiaſtical, and Fundi the firſt of the Neapolitan, dominions. This laſt town ſtands on a plain, ſheltered by hills, which is ſeldom the caſe with Italian towns: it probably derives its name from its ſituation. There is nothing very attractive in this place, now, more than in Horace's time; ſo we left it as willingly as he did:

Fundos Aufidio Luſco Prætore *libenter*
Linquimus.

Continuing our route, partly on the Appian way, we came to Mola di Gaeta, a town built on the ruins of the ancient Formiæ. Horace compliments Ælius Lamia, on his being deſcended from the firſt founder of this city:

> Auctore ab illo ducis originem,
> Qui Formiarum mœnia dicitur,
> Princeps.

The ſame Poet puts the wine, made from the grapes of the Formian hills, on a footing with the Falernian:

> ——mea nec Falernæ
> Temperant vites, neque Formiani
> Pocula colles.

Cicero had a villa near this place; and it was on this coaſt where that great orator was murdered in his litter, as he was endeavouring to make his eſcape to Greece. The fortreſs of Gaeta is built on a promontory, about three miles from Mola; but travellers, who have the curioſity to go to the former, generally croſs the gulph between the two; and immediately, as the moſt remarkable thing in the place, they are ſhewn a great cleft in a rock, and informed that it was miraculouſly ſplit in this manner at the death of our Saviour. To put this beyond doubt, they ſhew, at the ſame time, ſomething like the impreſſion of a man's hand on the rock, of which the following account is given.—A certain perſon

having been told on what occaſion the rent took place, ſtruck the palm of his hand on the marble, declaring he could no more believe their ſtory, than that his hand would leave its ſtamp on the rock; on which, to the terror and confuſion of this infidel, the ſtone yielded like wax, and the impreſſion remains till this day.

Nothing is ſo injurious to the cauſe of truth, as attempts to ſupport it by fiction. Many evidences of the juſtneſs of this obſervation occur in the courſe of a tour through Italy. That mountains were rent at the death of our Saviour, we know from the New Teſtament; but, as none of them are there particularized, it is preſumptuous in others to imagine they can point out what the Evangeliſts have thought proper to conceal.

This rock, however, is much reſorted to by pilgrims; and the Tartanes, and other veſſels, often touch there, that the ſeamen may be provided with little pieces of marble, which they earneſtly requeſt may be taken as near the fiſſure as poſſible. Theſe they wear conſtantly in their pockets, in caſe of ſhipwreck, from a perſuaſion, that they are a more certain preſervative from drowning, than a cork jacket. Some of theſe poor people have the misfortune to be drowned, notwithſtanding; but the ſacred marble loſes none of its reputation on that account. Such accidents are always imputed to the weight of the unfortunate perſon's ſins, which have ſunk

him to the bottom, in ſpite of all the efforts of the marble to keep him above water; and it is allowed on all hands, that a man ſo oppreſſed with iniquity, as to be drowned with a piece of this marble in his pocket, would have ſunk much ſooner, if, inſtead of that, he had had nothing to keep him up but a cork jacket.

Strangers are next led to the Caſtle, and are ſhewn, with ſome other curioſities, the ſkeleton of the famous Bourbon, Conſtable of France, who was killed in the ſervice of the emperor Charles the Fifth, as he ſcaled the walls of Rome.

It is remarkable that France, a nation which values itſelf ſo much on an affectionate attachment to its princes, and places loyalty at the head of the virtues, ſhould have produced, in the courſe of the two laſt centuries, ſo many illuſtrious rebels: Bourbon, Coligni, Guiſe, Turenne, and the Condés; all of them were, at ſome period of their lives, in arms againſt their ſovereign.

That it is the duty of ſubjects to preſerve their allegiance, however unjuſtly and tyrannically their prince may conduct himſelf, is one of the moſt debaſing and abſurd doctrines that ever was obtruded on the underſtanding of mankind. When Francis forgot the ſervices which the gallant Bourbon had rendered him at Mirignan; when, by repeated acts of oppreſſion, he forgot the duty of a king; Bourbon ſpurned at his allegiance, as a ſubject. The Spaniſh nobleman,

who declared that he would pull down his houſe, if Bourbon ſhould be allowed to lodge in it, either never had heard of the injurious treatment which that gallant ſoldier had received, or he betrayed the ſentiments of a ſlave, and meant to inſinuate his own implicit loyalty to the Emperor. Mankind in general have a partiality for princes. The ſenſes are impoſed on by the ſplendour which ſurrounds them; and the reſpect due to the office of a king, is naturally converted into an affection for his perſon: there muſt therefore be ſomething highly unpopular in the character of the monarch, and highly oppreſſive in the meaſures of government, before people can be excited to rebellion. Subjects ſeldom riſe through a deſire of attacking, but rather from an impatience of ſuffering. Where men are under the yoke of feudal lords, who can force them to fight in any cauſe, it may be otherwiſe; but when general diſcontent pervades a free people, and when, in conſequence of this, they take arms againſt their prince, they muſt have juſtice on their ſide. The higheſt compliment which ſubjects can pay, and the beſt ſervice they can render, to a good prince, is, to behave in ſuch a manner, as to convince him that they would rebel againſt a bad one.

From Mola we were conducted by the Appian way, over the fertile fields waſhed by the ſilent Liris:

——Rura quæ Liris quieta
Mordet aqua, taciturnis amnis.

This river bounded Latium. On its banks are ſtill ſeen ſome ruins of the ancient Minturnæ. After Manlius Torquatus, in what ſome will call a phrenzy of virtue, had offered up his ſon as a ſacrifice to military diſcipline; and his colleague Decius, immediately after, devoted himſelf in a battle againſt the Latins; the broken army of that people aſſembled at Minturnæ, and were a ſecond time defeated by Manlius, and their lands divided by the ſenate among the citizens of Rome. The firſt battle was fought near Mount Veſuvius, and the ſecond between Sinueſſa and Minturnæ. In the moraſſes of Minturnæ, Caius Marius, in the ſeventieth year of his age, was taken, and brought a priſoner to that city, whoſe magiſtrates ordered an aſſaſſin to put him to death, whom the fierce veteran diſarmed with a look. What mortal, ſays Juvenal, would have been thought more fortunate than Marius, had he breathed out his aſpiring ſoul, ſurrounded by the captives he had made, his victorious troops, and all the pomp of war, as he deſcended from his Teutonic chariot, after his triumph over the Cimbri.

——Quid illo cive tuliſſet
Natura in terris, quid Roma beatius unquam?
Si circumducto captivorum agmine, et omni
Bellorum pompâ, animam exhalâſſet opimam,
Cum de Teutonico vellet deſcendere curru.

Several writers, in their remarks on Italy, obſerve, that it was on the banks of the Liris

that Pyrrhus gained his dear-bought victory over the Romans. They have fallen into this miſtake, by confounding the Liris with the Siris, a river in Magna Græcia, near Heraclea; in the neighbourhood of which Pyrrhus defeated the Romans by the means of his elephants.

Leaving Garilagno, which is the modern name of the Liris, we paſs the riſing ground where the ancient Sinueſſa was ſituated; the city where Horace met his friends Plotius, Varius, and Virgil. The friendly glow with which this admirable painter has adorned their characters, conveys an amiable idea of his own.

——Animæ, quales neque candidiores
Terra tulit; neque queis me ſit devinctior alter.
O, qui complexus et gaudia quanta fuerunt!
Nil ego contulerim jucundo ſanus amico.

Do you not ſhare in the happineſs of ſuch a company? And are you not rejoiced that they happened to meet near the Ager Falernus, where they could have the beſt Maſſic and Falernian wines?

New Capua, through which the road from Rome to Naples lies, is a ſmall town of no importance. The ancient city of that name was ſituated two miles diſtant from the new. The ruins of the amphitheatre, which are ſtill to be ſeen, give ſome idea of the ancient grandeur of that city. Before the amphitheatre of Veſpaſian

was built, there was none in Rome of equal ſize with this. Old Capua is ſaid, at one period, to have vied in magnificence with Rome and Carthage:

Altera dicta olim Carthago, atque altera Roma,
Nunc proſtrata jacet, proprioque ſepulta ſepulchro.

The army of Hannibal is ſaid to have been conquered by the luxuries of this place; but the judicious Monteſquieu obſerves, that the Carthaginian army, enriched by ſo many victories, would have found a Capua wherever they had gone. Whether Capua brought on the ruin of Hannibal or not, there can be no doubt that Hannibal occaſioned the ruin of Capua.

Having broken their connection with Rome, and formed an alliance with her enemy, the Capuans were, in the courſe of the war, beſieged by the Conſuls Fulvius and Appius. Hannibal exerted all his vaſt abilities for the relief of his new friends; but was not able to bring the Roman army to a battle, or to raiſe the ſiege. When every other expedient had failed, he marched directly to Rome, in the hopes of drawing the Roman army after him to defend the capital. A number of alarming events conſpired, at this time, to depreſs the ſpirit of the Roman Senate. The Proconſul Sempronius Gracchus, who commanded an army in Lucania, had fallen into an ambuſcade, and was maſſacred.

The two gallant brothers, the Scipios, who were their generals in Spain, had been defeated and killed; and Hannibal was at their gates. How did the Senate behave at this criſis? Did they ſpend their time in idle harangues and mutual accuſations? Did they throw out reflections againſt thoſe ſenators who were againſt entering into a treaty with the Carthaginians till their army ſhould be withdrawn from Italy? Did they recall their army from Capua? Did they ſhew any mark of deſpondence? In this ſtate of affairs, the Roman Senate ſent orders to Appius to continue the ſiege of Capua; they ordered a reinforcement to their army in Spain; the troops for that ſervice marching out at one gate of Rome, while Hannibal threatened to enter by ſtorm at another. How could ſuch a people fail to become the maſters of the world!

The country between Capua and Naples diſplays a varied ſcene of laviſh fertility, and with great propriety might be named Campania Felix, if the richeſt and moſt generous ſoil, with the mildeſt and moſt agreeable climate, were ſufficient to render the inhabitants of a country happy.

LETTER LV.

Naples.

THE day after our arrival at this place, we waited on Sir W—— H——, his Majeſty's miniſter at this court. He had gone early that morning on a hunting party with the King; but the Portugueſe ambaſſador, at L—y H——'s deſire, undertook to accompany the D—— on the uſual round of viſits; Sir W—— was not expected to return for ſeveral days, and the laws of etiquette do not allow that important tour to be delayed ſo long. As we have been continually driving about ever ſince our arrival, I am already pretty well acquainted with this town, and the environs.

Naples was founded by the Greeks. The charming ſituation they have choſen, is one proof among thouſands, of the fine taſte of that ingenious people.

The bay is about thirty miles in circumference, and twelve in diameter; it has been named Crater, from its ſuppoſed reſemblance to a bowl. This bowl is ornamented with the moſt beautiful foliage, with vines; with olive, mulberry, and

orange trees; with hills, dales, towns, villas, and villages.

At the bottom of the bay of Naples, the town is built in the form of a vaſt amphitheatre, ſloping from the hills towards the ſea.

If, from the town, you turn your eyes to the eaſt, you ſee the rich plains leading to mount Veſuvius, and Portici. If you look to the weſt, you have the Grotto of Pauſilippo, the mountain on which Virgil's tomb is placed, and the fields leading to Puzzoli and the coaſt of Baia. On the north, are the fertile hills, gradually riſing from the ſhore to the Campagna Felice. On the South, is the bay, confined by the two promontories of Miſenum and Minerva, the view being terminated by the iſlands Procida, Iſchia, and Caprea; and as you aſcend to the caſtle of St. Elmo, you have all theſe objects under your eye at once, with the addition of a great part of the Campagna.

Independent of its happy ſituation, Naples is a very beautiful city. The ſtyle of architecture, it muſt be confeſſed, is inferior to what prevails at Rome; but though Naples cannot vie with that city in the number of palaces, or in the grandeur and magnificence of the churches, the private houſes in general are better built, and are more uniformly convenient; the ſtreets are broader and better paved. No ſtreet in Rome equals in beauty the Strada di Toledo at Naples;

and ſtill leſs can any of them be compared with thoſe beautiful ſtreets which are open to the bay. This is the native country of the Zephyrs; here the exceſſive heat of the Sun is often tempered with ſea breezes, and with gales, wafting the perfumes of the Campagna Felice.

The houſes, in general, are five or ſix ſtories in height, and flat at the top; on which are placed, numbers of flower vaſes or fruit trees, in boxes of earth, producing a very gay and agreeable effect.

The fortreſs of St. Elmo is built on a mountain of the ſame name. The garriſon ſtationed here, have the entire command of the town, and could lay it in aſhes at pleaſure. A little lower, on the ſame mountain, is a convent of Carthuſians. The ſituation of this convent is as advantageous and beautiful as can be imagined; and much expence has been laviſhed to render the building, the apartments, and the gardens, equal to the ſituation.

To beſtow great ſums of money in adorning the retreat of men who have abandoned the world for the expreſs purpoſe of paſſing the remainder of their lives in ſelf-denial and mortification, ſeems to be very ill judged, and might, on ſome occaſions, counteract the deſign of their retreat. I expreſſed this ſentiment to a Neapolitan lady at Sir W—— H——'s aſſembly, the

evening after I had viſited this convent. She ſaid, "that the elegant apartments, the gardens, "and all the expenſive ornaments I had parti- "cularifed, could not much impede a ſyſtem "of ſelf-denial; for they ſoon became inſipid "to thoſe who had them conſtantly before "their eyes, and proved no compenſation for "the want of other comforts." "In that "caſe," ſaid I "the whole expence might "have been ſaved, or beſtowed in procuring "comforts to others who have made no vows "of mortification." "Tolga iddio!" cried the lady, forgetting her former argument, "for none have ſo good a title to every com- "fortable and pleaſant thing in this world, as "thoſe who have renounced it, and placed "their affections entirely on the next; inſtead "of depriving theſe ſanctified Carthuſians of "what they already poſſeſs, it would be more "meritorious to give them what they have "not."

"Give them then, ſaid I, what will afford "ſome ſatisfaction, inſtead of the luxuries of "ſculpture, and painting, and architecture, "which, as you ſay, become ſo ſoon inſipid; "let them have enjoyments of a different kind. "Why ſhould their diet be confined to fiſh "and vegetables? Let them enjoy the pleaſures "of the table without any limitation. And "ſince they are ſo very meritorious, why is "your ſex deprived of the happineſs of their

"converſation, and why are they denied the "pleaſure which the ſociety of women might "afford them?"

"Criſto benedetto!" cried the lady, "You "do not underſtand this matter.——Though "none deſerve the pleaſures of this world, but "thoſe who think only on the next; yet none "can obtain the joys of the next, who indulge "in the pleaſures of this."

"That is unlucky," ſaid I.

"Unlucky! to be ſure it is the moſt unlucky "thing that could have happened, *ecco dove mi "doleva*," added the lady.

Though Naples is admirably ſituated for commerce, and no kingdom produces the neceſſaries and luxuries of life in greater profuſion, yet trade is but in a languiſhing condition; the beſt ſilks come from Lyons, and the beſt woollen goods from England.

The chief articles manufactured here, at preſent, are, ſilk ſtockings, ſoap, ſnuff-boxes, or tortoiſe ſhells; and the lava of Mount Veſuvius, tables, and ornamental furniture, of marble.

They are thought to embroider here better than even in France; and their macaroni is

preferred to that made in any other part of Italy. The Neapolitans excel alſo in liqueurs and confections; particularly in one kind of confection, which is ſold at a very high price, called Diabolonis. This drug, as you will gueſs from its name, is of a very hot and ſtimulating nature, and what I ſhould think by no means requiſite to Neapolitan conſtitutions.

The inhabitants of this town are computed at three hundred and fifty thouſand. I make no doubt of their amounting to that number; for though Naples is not one third of the ſize of London, yet many of the ſtreets here are more crowded than the Strand. In London and Paris the people who fill the ſtreets are mere paſſengers hurrying from place to place on buſineſs; and when they chooſe to converſe, or to amuſe themſelves, they reſort to the public walks or gardens: at Naples, the citizens have fewer avocations of buſineſs to excite their activity; no public walks, or gardens to which they can reſort; and are, therefore, more frequently ſeen ſauntering and converſing in the ſtreets, where a great proportion of the pooreſt ſort, for want of habitations, are obliged to ſpend the night as well as the day. While you ſit in your chamber at London, or at Paris, the uſual noiſe you hear from the ſtreets, is that of carriages; but at Naples, where they talk with uncommon vivacity, and where whole ſtreets full of talkers are in continual employment, the noiſe of

carriages is completely drowned in the aggregated clack of human voices. In the midſt of all this idleneſs, fewer riots or outrages of any kind happen, than might be expected in a town where the police is far from being ſtrict, and where ſuch multitudes of poor unemployed people meet together every day. This partly proceeds from the national character of the Italians; which, in my opinion, is quiet, ſubmiſſive, and averſe to riot or ſedition; and partly to the common people being univerſally ſober, and never inflamed with ſtrong and ſpirituous liquors, as they are in the northern countries. Iced water and lemonade are among the luxuries of the loweſt vulgar; they are carried about in little barrels, and ſold in half-penny's worth. The half naked lazzarone is often tempted to ſpend the ſmall pittance deſtined for the maintenance of his family, on this bewitching beverage, as the moſt diſſolute of the low people in London ſpend their wages on gin and brandy; ſo that the ſame extravagance which cools the mob of the one city, tends to inflame that of the other to acts of exceſs and brutality.

There is not, perhaps, a city in the world, with the ſame number of inhabitants, in which ſo few contribute to the wealth of the community by uſeful, or by productive labour, as Naples; but the numbers of prieſts, monks, fiddlers, lawyers, nobility, footmen, and lazzaronis, ſurpaſs all reaſonable proportion; the laſt

alone are computed at thirty or forty thouſand. If theſe poor fellows are idle, it is not their own fault; they are continually running about the ſtreets, as we are told of the artificers of China; offering their ſervice, and begging for employment; and are conſidered by many, as of more real utility than any of the claſſes above mentioned.

LETTER LVI.

Naples.

THERE is an aſſembly once a week at the houſe of the Britiſh miniſter; no aſſembly in Naples is more numerous, or more brilliant, than this. Excluſive of that gentleman's good qualities, and thoſe accompliſhments which procure eſteem in any ſituation, he would meet with every mark of regard from the Neapolitan nobles, on account of the high favour in which he ſtands with their Sovereign. Sir W——'s houſe is open to ſtrangers of every country who come to Naples properly recommended, as well as to the Engliſh; he has a private concert almoſt every evening. L—y H—— underſtands muſic perfectly, and performs in ſuch a manner, as to command the admiration even of the Neapolitans. Sir W——, who is the happieſt tempered man in the world, and the eaſieſt amuſed, performs alſo, and ſucceeds perfectly in amuſing himſelf, which is a more valuable attainment than the other.

The Neapolitan nobility are exceſſively fond of ſplendour and ſhow. This appears in the brilliancy of their equipages, the number of their

attendants, the richneſs of their dreſs, and the grandeur of their titles.

I am aſſured, that the King of Naples counts a hundred perſons with the title of Prince, and ſtill a greater number with that of Duke, among his ſubjects. Six or ſeven of theſe have eſtates, which produce from ten to twelve or thirteen thouſand pounds a year; a conſiderable number have fortunes of about half that value; and the annual revenue of many is not above one or two thouſand pounds. With reſpect to the inferior orders of nobility, they are much poorer; many Counts and Marquiſſes have not above three or four hundred pounds a year of paternal eſtate, many ſtill leſs, and not a few enjoy the title without any eſtate whatever.

When we conſider the magnificence of their entertainments, the ſplendour of their equipages, and the number of their ſervants, we are ſurpriſed that the richeſt of them can ſupport ſuch expenſive eſtabliſhments. I dined, ſoon after our arrival, at the prince of Franca Villa's; there were about forty people at table; it was meagre day; the dinner conſiſted entirely of fiſh and vegetables, and was the moſt magnificent entertainment I ever ſaw, comprehending an infinite variety of diſhes, a vaſt profuſion of fruit, and the wines of every country in Europe. I dined ſince at the Prince Iacci's. I ſhall mention two circumſtances, from which you may form

an idea of the grandeur of an Italian palace, and the number of domeſtics which ſome of the nobility retain. We paſſed through twelve or thirteen large rooms before we arrived at the dining room; there were thirty-ſix perſons at table, none ſerved but the Prince's domeſtics, and each gueſt had a footman behind his chair; other domeſtics belonging to the Prince remained in the adjacent rooms, and in the hall. We afterwards paſſed through a conſiderable number of other rooms in our way to one from which there is a very commanding view.

No eſtate in England could ſupport ſuch a number of ſervants, paid and fed as Engliſh ſervants are; but here the wages are very moderate indeed, and the greater number of men ſervants, belonging to the firſt families, give their attendance through the day only, and find beds and proviſions for themſelves. It muſt be remembered, alſo, that few of the nobles give entertainments, and thoſe who do not, are ſaid to live very ſparingly; ſo that the whole of their revenue, whatever that may be, is exhauſted on articles of ſhow.

As there is no Opera at preſent, the people of faſhion generally paſs part of the evening at the Corſo, on the ſea-ſhore. This is the great ſcene of Neapolitan ſplendour and parade; and, on grand occaſions, the magnificence diſplayed here will ſtrike a ſtranger very much. The

fineſt carriages are painted, gilt, varniſhed, and lined, in a richer and more beautiful manner, than has as yet become faſhionable either in England or France; they are often drawn by ſix, and ſometimes by eight horſes. As the laſt is the number allotted to his Britannic Majeſty when he goes to parliament, ſome of our countrymen are offended that any individuals whatſoever ſhould preſume to drive with the ſame number.

It is the mode here, to have two running footmen, very gaily dreſſed, before the carriage, and three or four ſervants in rich liveries behind; theſe attendants are generally the handſomeſt young men than can be procured. The ladies or gentlemen within the coaches, glitter in all the brilliancy of lace, embroidery, and jewels. The Neapolitan carriages, for gala days, are made on purpoſe, with very large windows, that the ſpectators may enjoy a full view of the parties within. Nothing can be more ſhowy than the harneſs of the horſes; their heads and manes are ornamented with the rareſt plumage, and their tails ſet off with riband and artificial flowers, in ſuch a graceful manner that you are apt to think they have been adorned by the ſame hands that dreſſed the heads of the ladies, and not by common grooms.

After all, you will perhaps imagine the amuſement cannot be very great. The carriages

follow each other in two lines, moving in oppoſite directions. The company within ſmile, and bow, and wave the hand, as they paſs and repaſs their acquaintance; and doubtleſs imagine that they are the moſt important figures in the proceſſion. The horſes, however, ſeem to be quite of a different way of thinking, and to conſider themſelves as the chief objects of admiration, looking on the livery ſervants, the volantis, the lords, and the ladies, as their natural ſuite on all ſuch ſolemn occaſions.

LETTER LVII.

Naples.

THE greateſt part of kings, whatever may be thought of them after their death, have the good fortune to be repreſented, at ſome period of their lives, generally at the beginning of their reigns, as the greateſt and moſt virtuous of mankind. They are never compared to characters of leſs dignity than Solomnn, Alexander, Cæſar, or Titus; and the compariſon uſually concludes to the advantage of the living monarch. They differ in this, as in many other particulars, from thoſe of the moſt diſtinguiſhed genius and exalted merit among their ſubjects. That the fame of the latter, if any awaits them, ſeldom arrives at its meridian till many years after their death; whereas the glory of the former is at its fulleſt ſplendour during their lives; and moſt of them have the ſatisfaction of hearing all their praiſes with their own ears. Each particular monarch, taken ſeparately, is, or has been, conſidered as a ſtar of great luſtre; yet any number of them, taken without ſelection, and placed in the hiſtorical galaxy, add little to its brightneſs, and are often contemplated with diſguſt. When we have occaſion to mention kings in general, the expreſſion certainly does

not awaken a recollection of the moſt amiable or moſt deſerving part of the human ſpecies; and tyranny in no country is puſhed ſo far, as to conſtrain men to ſpeak of them, when we ſpeak in general terms, as if they were. It would revolt the feelings, and rouſe the indignation, even of ſlaves. Full freedom is allowed therefore on this topic; and, under the moſt arbitrary government, if you chooſe to declaim on the imbecility, profligacy, or corruption of human nature, you may draw your illuſtrations from the kings of any country, provided you take them in groupes, and hint nothing to the detriment of the reigning monarch. But, when we talk of any one living ſovereign, we ſhould never allow it to eſcape from our memory, that he is wiſe, valiant, generous, and good; and we ought always to have Solomon, Alexander, Cæſar and Titus, at our elbow, to introduce them apropos when occaſion offers. We may have what opinion we pleaſe of the whole race of Bourbon; but it would be highly indecent to deny, that the reigning kings of Spain and Naples are very great princes. As I never had the happineſs of ſeeing the father, I can only ſpeak of the ſon. His Neapolitan Majeſty ſeems to be about the age of ſix or ſeven-and-twenty. He is a prince of great activity of body, and a good conſtitution; he indulges in frequent relaxations from the cares of government and the fatigue of thinking, by hunting and other exerciſes; and (which ought to give a high idea of

his natural talents) he never fails to acquire a very conſiderable degree of perfection in thoſe things to which he applies. He is very fond, like the King of Pruſſia of reviewing his troops, and is perfectly maſter of the whole myſtery of the manual exerciſe. I have had the honour, oftner than once, of ſeeing him exerciſe the different regiments which form the garriſon here: he always gave the word of command with his own royal mouth, and with a preciſion which ſeemed to aſtoniſh the whole Court. This monarch is alſo a very excellent ſhot; his uncommon ſucceſs at this diverſion is thought to have rouſed the jealouſy of his Moſt Catholic Majeſty, who alſo values himſelf on his ſkill as a markſman. The correſpondence between thoſe two great perſonages often relates to their favourite amuſement.—A gentleman, who came lately from Madrid, told me, that the King on ſome occaſion, had read a letter which he had juſt received from his ſon at Naples, wherein he complained of his bad ſucceſs on a ſhooting party, having killed no more than eighty birds in a day: and the Spaniſh monarch, turning to his courtiers, ſaid, in a plaintive tone of voice, "Mio "filio piange di non aver' fatto piu di ottante "beccacie in uno giorno, quando mi crederei "l'uomo il piu felice del mondo ſe poteſſe fare "quaranta." All who take a becoming ſhare in the afflictions of a royal boſom, will no doubt join with me, in wiſhing better ſucceſs to this good monarch, for the future. Fortunate would

it be for mankind, if the happineſs of their princes could be purchaſed at ſo eaſy a rate! and thrice fortunate for the generous people of Spain, if the family connexions of their monarch, often at variance with the real intereſt of that country, ſhould never ſeduce him into a more ruinous war, than that which he now wages againſt the beaſts of the field and the birds of the air. His Neapolitan Majeſty, as I am informed, poſſeſſes many other accompliſhments; I particulariſe thoſe only to which I have myſelf been a witneſs. No king in Europe is ſuppoſed to underſtand the game of billiards better. I had the pleaſure of ſeeing him ſtrike the moſt brilliant ſtroke, that perhaps ever was ſtruck by a crowned head. The ball of his antagoniſt was near one of the middle pockets, and his own in ſuch a ſituation, that it was abſolutely neceſſary to make it rebound from two different parts of the cuſhion, before it could pocket the other. A perſon of leſs enterpriſe would have been contented with placing himſelf in a ſafe ſituation, at a ſmall loſs, and never have riſqued any offenſive attempt againſt the enemy; but the difficulty and danger, inſtead of intimidating, ſeemed rather to animate the ambition of this prince. He ſummoned all his addreſs; he eſtimated, with a mathematical eye, the angles at which the ball muſt fly off; and he ſtruck it with an undaunted mind and a ſteady hand. It rebounded obliquely from the oppoſite ſide-cuſhion, to that at the end; from which it moved in a direct line towards the

dle pocket, which ſeemed to ſtand in gaping expectation to receive it. The hearts of the ſpectators beat thick as it rolled along; and they ſhewed, by the contortions of their faces and perſons, how much they feared that it ſhould move one hair-breadth in a wrong direction.—I muſt here interrupt this important narrative, to obſerve, that, when I talk of contortions, if you form your idea from any thing of that kind which you may have ſeen around an Engliſh billiard-table or bowling-green, you can have no juſt notion of thoſe which were exhibited on this occaſion: your imagination muſt triple the force and energy of every Engliſh grimace, before it can do juſtice to the nervous twiſt of an Italian countenance.—At length the royal ball reached that of the enemy, and with a ſingle blow drove it off the plain. An univerſal ſhout of joy, triumph and applauſe burſt from the beholders; but,

> O thoughtleſs mortals ever blind to fate,
> Too ſoon dejected, and too ſoon elate!

the victorious ball, purſuing the enemy too far, ſhared the ſame fate, and was buried in the ſame grave with the vanquiſhed. This fatal and unforeſeen event ſeemed to make a deep impreſſion on the minds of all who were witneſſes to it; and will no doubt be recorded in the annals of the preſent reign, and quoted by future poets and

hiſtorians, as a ſtriking inſtance of the inſtability of ſublunary felicity.

It is imagined that the cabinet of this Court is entirely guided by that of Spain; which, on its part, is thought to be greatly under the influence of French counſels. The manners, as well as the politics, of France, are ſaid to prevail at preſent at the Court of Madrid. I do not preſume to ſay of what nature the politics of his Neapolitan Majeſty are, or whether he is fond of French counſels or not; but no true-born Engliſhman exiſting can ſhew a more perfect contempt of their manners than he does. In domeſtic life, this Prince is generally allowed to be an eaſy maſter, a good-natured huſband, a dutiful ſon, and an indulgent father.

The Queen of Naples is a beautiful woman, and ſeems to poſſeſs the affability, good-humour, and benevolence, which diſtinguiſh, in ſuch an amiable manner, the Auſtrian family.

LETTER LVIII.

Naples.

THE hereditary juriſdiction of the nobles over their vaſſals ſubſiſts, both in the kingdom of Naples and Sicily, in the full rigour of the feudal government. The peaſants therefore are poor; and it depends entirely on the perſonal character of the maſters, whether their poverty is not the leaſt of their grievances. If the land was leaſed out to free farmers, whoſe property was perfectly ſecure, and the leaſes of a ſufficient length to allow the tenant to reap the fruits of his own improvements, there is no manner of doubt that the eſtates of the nobility would produce much more. The landlord might have a higher rent paid in money, inſtead of being collected in kind, which ſubjects him to the ſalaries and impoſitions of a numerous train of ſtewards; and the tenants, on their parts, would be enabled to live much more comfortably, and to lay up, every year, a ſmall pittance for their families. But the love of domineering is ſo predominant in the breaſts of men who have been accuſtomed to it from their infancy, that, if the alternative were in their choice, many of them would rather ſubmit to be themſelves ſlaves to the caprices of an abſolute prince, than become

perfectly independent, on the condition of giving independence to their vaſſals. There is reaſon to believe that this ungenerous ſpirit prevails pretty univerſally among the nobility all over Europe. The German Barons are more ſhocked at the idea of their peaſants becoming perfectly free, like the farmers of Great-Britain, than they are ſolicitous to limit the power of their princes: And, from the ſentiments I have heard expreſſed by the French, I very much doubt, whether their high nobility would accept of the privileges of Engliſh peers, at the expence of that inſolent ſuperiority, and thoſe licentious freedoms, with which *they* may, though no Engliſh peer can, treat with impunity the citizens and people of inferior rank. We need be the leſs ſurpriſed at this, when we conſider that, in ſome parts of the Britiſh empire, where the equable and generous laws of England prevail, thoſe who ſet the higheſt value on freedom, who ſubmit to every hardſhip, and encounter every danger, to ſecure it to themſelves, never have ſhewn a diſpoſition of extending its bleſſings, or even alleviating the bondage of that part of the human ſpecies, which a ſordid and unjuſtifiable barter has brought into their power.

The Court of Naples has not yet ventured, by one open act of authority, to aboliſh the immoderate power of the lords over their tenants. But it is believed that the Miniſter ſecretly wiſhes for its deſtruction; and in caſes of flagrant

oppreſſion, when complaints are brought before the legal courts, or directly to the King himſelf, by the peaſants againſt their lord, it is generally remarked that the Miniſter favours the complainant. Notwithſtanding this, the maſters have ſo many opportunities of oppreſſing, and ſuch various methods of teaſing, their vaſſals, that they generally chuſe to bear their wrongs in ſilence; and perceiving that thoſe who hold their lands immediately from the Crown, are in a much eaſier ſituation than themſelves, without raiſing their hopes to perfect freedom, the height of their wiſhes is to be ſheltered, from the vexations of little tyrants, under the unlimited power of one common maſter. The objects of royal attention, they fondly imagine, are too ſublime, and the minds of kings too generous, to ſtoop to, or even to countenance, in their ſervants, the minute and unreaſonable exertions, which are wrung at preſent from the hard hands of the exhauſted labourer.

Though the Neapolitan nobility ſtill retain the ancient feudal authority over the peaſants, yet their perſonal importance depends, in a great meaſure, on the favour of the King; who, under pretext of any offence, can confine them to their own eſtates, or impriſon them at pleaſure; and who, without any alleged offence, and without going to ſuch extremes, can inflict a puniſhment, highly ſenſible to them, by not inviting them to the amuſements of the Court, or not

receiving them with ſmiles when they attend on any ordinary occaſion. Unleſs this prince were ſo very impolitic as to diſguſt all the nobility at once, and ſo unite the whole body againſt him, he has little to fear from their reſentment. Even in caſe of ſuch an union, as the nobles have loſt the affection and attachments of their peaſants, what could they do in oppoſition to a ſtanding army of thirty thouſand men, entirely devoted to the Crown? The eſtabliſhment of ſtanding armies has univerſally given ſtability to the power of the prince, and ruined that of the great lords. No nobility in Europe can now be ſaid to inherit political importance, or to act independent of, or in oppoſition to, the influence of the crown; except the *temporal peers of that part of Great-Britain called England.*

As men of high birth are ſeldom, in this country, called to the management of public affairs, or placed in thoſe ſituations where great political knowledge is required; and as his Majeſty relies on his own talents and experience in war for the direction of the army; neither the civil nor military eſtabliſhments open any very tempting field for the ambition of the nobles, whoſe education is uſually adapted to the parts in life which they have a probability of acting. Their fortunes and titles deſcend to them, independent of any effort of their own. All the literary diſtinctions are beneath their regard; it is therefore not thought expedient to cloud the playful

innocence of their childhood, or the amiable gaiety of their youth, with ſevere ſtudy. In ſome other countries, where a very ſmall portion of literary education is thought becoming for young men of rank, and where even this ſmall portion has been neglected, they ſometimes catch a little knowledge of hiſtory and mythology, and ſome uſeful moral ſentiments, from the excellent dramatic pieces that are repreſented on their theatres. They alſo ſometimes pick up ſome notion of the different governments in Europe, and a few political ideas, in the courſe of their travels. But the nobility of this country very ſeldom travel; and the only dramatic pieces, repreſented here, are operas; in which muſic, not ſentiment, is the principal thing attended to. In the other theatrical entertainments, Punchinello is the ſhining character. To this diſregard of literature among the nobles, it is owing, that in their body are to be found few tireſome, ſcholaſtic pedants, and none of thoſe perturbed ſpirits, who ruffle the ſerenity of nations by political alarms, who clog the wheels of government by oppoſition, who pry into the conduct of miniſters, or in any way diſturb that total indifference with regard to the public, which prevails all over this kingdom. We are told by a great modern Hiſtorian *, that "force of mind, a ſenſe "of perſonal dignity, gallantry in enterpriſe, in-"vincible perſeverance in execution, contempt

* Vide Dr. Robertſon's Hiſtory of the Emperor Charles V. Sect. I.

"of danger and of death, are the characteriſtic "virtues of unciviliſed nations." But as the nobles of this country have long been ſufficiently civiliſed, theſe qualities may in them be ſuppoſed to have given place to the arts which embelliſh a poliſhed age; to gaming, gallantry, muſic, the parade of equipage, the refinements of dreſs, and other nameleſs refinements.

LETTER LIX.

Naples.

THE citizens of Naples form a ſociety of their own, perfectly diſtinct from the nobility; and although they are not the moſt induſtrious people in the world, yet, having ſome degree of occupation, and their time being divided between buſineſs and pleaſure, they probably have more enjoyment than thoſe, who, without internal reſources, or opportunities of active exertion, paſs their lives in ſenſual gratifications, and in waiting the returns of appetite around a gaming table. In the moſt reſpectable claſs of citizens, are comprehended the lawyers, of whom there are an incredible number in this town. The moſt eminent of this profeſſion hold, indeed, a kind of intermediate rank between the nobility and citizens; the reſt are on a level with the phyſicians, the principal merchants, and the artiſts; none of whom can make great fortunes, however induſtrious they may be; but a moderate income enables them to ſupport their rank in ſociety, and to enjoy all the conveniences, and many of the luxuries, of life.

England is perhaps the only nation in Europe where ſome individuals, of every profeſſion, even

of the loweſt, find it poſſible to accumulate great fortunes; the effect of this very frequently is, that the ſon deſpiſes the profeſſion of the father, commences gentleman, and diſſipates, in a few years, what coſt a life to gather. In the principal cities of Germany and Italy, we find, that the anceſtors of many of thoſe citizens who are the moſt eminent in their particular buſineſſes, have tranſmitted the art to them through ſeveral generations. It is natural to imagine, that this will tend to the improvement of the art, or ſcience, or profeſſion, as well as the family fortune; and that the third generation will acquire knowledge from the experience, as well as wealth from the induſtry, of the former two; whereas, in the caſes alluded to above, the wheel of fortune moves differently. A man, by aſſiduity in a particular buſineſs, and by genius, acquires a great fortune and a high reputation; the ſon throws away the fortune, and ruins his own character by extravagance; and the grandſon is obliged to recommence the buſineſs, unaided by the wealth or experience of his anceſtors. This, however, is pointing out an evil which I ſhould be ſorry to ſee remedied; becauſe it certainly originates in the riches and proſperity of the country in which it exiſts.

The number of prieſts, monks, and eccleſiaſtics of all the various orders that ſwarm in this city, is prodigious; and the proviſion

appropriated for their uſe, is as ample. I am aſſured, that the clergy are in poſſeſſion of conſiderably above one-third of the revenue of the whole kingdom, over and above what ſome particular orders among them acquire by begging for the uſe of their convents, and what is gotten in legacies by the addreſs and aſſiduity of the whole. The unproductive wealth, which is lodged in the churches and convents of this city, amounts alſo to an amazing value. Not to be compared in point of architecture to the churches and convents of Rome, thoſe of Naples ſurpaſs them in riches, in the value of their jewels, and in the quantity of ſilver and golden crucifixes, veſſels, and implements of various kinds. I have often heard theſe eſtimated at a ſum ſo enormous as to ſurpaſs all credibility; and which, as I have no opportunity of aſcertaining with any degree of preciſion, I ſhall not mention. This wealth, whatever it amounts to, is of as little uſe to the kingdom, as if it ſtill remained in the mines of Peru; and the greater part of it, ſurely, affords as little comfort to the clergy and monks as to any other part of the community; for though it belongs to their church, or their convent, yet it can no more be converted to the uſe of the prieſts and monks of ſuch churches and convents, than to the tradeſmen who inhabit the adjacent ſtreets. For this reaſon I am a good deal ſurpriſed, that no pretext, or ſubterfuge, has been found, no expedient fallen on, no treaty or

convention made, for appropriating part of this at leaſt, to the uſe of ſome ſet of people or other. If the clergy were to lay their hands on it, this might be found fault with by the King; if his Majeſty dreamt of taking any part of it for the exigencies of the ſtate, the clergy would undoubtedly raiſe a clamour; and if both united, the Pope would think he had a right to pronounce his vote: but if all theſe three powers could come to an underſtanding, and ſettle their proportions, I am apt to think a partition might be made as quietly as that of Poland.

Whatever ſcruples the Neapolitan clergy may have to ſuch a project, they certainly have none to the full enjoyment of their revenues. No claſs of men can be leſs diſpoſed to offend Providence by a peeviſh neglect of the good things which the bounty of heaven has beſtowed. Self-denial is a virtue, which I will not ſay they poſſeſs in a ſmaller degree, but which, I am ſure, they affect leſs than any other eccleſiaſtics I know; they live very much in ſociety, both with the nobles and citizens. All of them, the monks not excepted, attend the theatre, and ſeem to join moſt cordially in other diverſions and amuſements; the common people are no ways offended at this, or imagine that they ought to live in a more recluſe manner. Some of the orders have had the addreſs to make a concern for their temporal intereſt, and a deſire of ſeeing them live full, and in ſomething of a jolly

manner, be regarded by the common people as a proof of zeal for religion. I am informed, that a very conſiderable diminution in the number of monks has taken place in the kingdom of Naples ſince the ſuppreſſion of the Jeſuits, and ſince a liberty of quitting the cowl was granted by the late Pope; but ſtill there is no reaſon to complain of a deficiency in this order of men. The richeſt and moſt commodious convents in Europe, both for male and female votaries, are in this city; the moſt fertile and beautiful hills of the environs are covered with them; a ſmall part of their revenue is ſpent in feeding the poor, the monks diſtributing bread and ſoup to a certain number every day before the doors of the convents. Some of the friars ſtudy phyſic and ſurgery, and practiſe theſe arts with great applauſe. Each convent has an apothecary's ſhop belonging to it, where medicines are delivered gratis to the poor, and ſold to thoſe who can afford to pay. On all theſe accounts the monks in general are greater favourites with the common people than even the ſecular clergy; all the charity of the friars, however, would not be able to cover their ſins, if the ſtories circulated by their enemies were true,—by which they are repreſented as the greateſt profligates and debauchees in the world. Without giving credit to all that is reported on this ſubject, as the Neapolitan monks are very well fed, as this

climate is not the moſt favourable to continency (a virtue which in this place is by no means eſtimated in proportion to its rarity), it is moſt likely that the inhabitants of the convents, like the inhabitants in general, indulge in certain pleaſures with leſs ſcruple or reſtraint than is uſual in ſome other places. Be that as it may, it is certain that they are the moſt ſuperſtitious of mankind; a turn of mind which they communicate with equal zeal and ſucceſs to a people remarkably ignorant, and remarkably amorous. The ſeeds of ſuperſtition thus zealouſly ſown on ſuch a warm and fertile, though uncultivated, ſoil, ſometimes produce the moſt extraordinary crops of ſenſuality and devotion that ever were ſeen in any country.

The lazzaroni, or black-guards, as has been already obſerved, form a conſiderable part of the inhabitants of Naples; and have, on ſome well-known occaſions, had the government for a ſhort time in their own hands. They are computed at above thirty thouſand; the greater part of them have no dwelling-houſes, but ſleep every night under porticos, piazzas, or any kind of ſhelter they can find. Thoſe of them who have wives and children, live in the ſuburbs of Naples near Pauſilippo, in huts, or in caverns or chambers dug out of that mountain. Some gain a livelihood by fiſhing, others by carrying burdens to and from the ſhipping; many walk about the ſtreets ready to run on

errands, or to perform any labour in their power for a very ſmall recompence. As they do not meet with conſtant employment, their wages are not ſufficient for their maintenance; the ſoup and bread diſtributed at the door of the convents ſupply the deficiency. The lazzaroni are generally repreſented as a lazy, licentious, and turbulent iet of people; what I have obſerved gives me a very different idea of their character. Their idleneſs is evidently the effect of neceſſity, not of choice; they are always ready to perform any work, however laborious, for a very reaſonable gratification. It muſt proceed from the fault of Government, when ſuch a number of ſtout active citizens remain unemployed; and ſo far are they from being licentious and turbulent, that I cannot help thinking they are by much too tame and ſubmiſſive. Though the inhabitants of the Italian cities were the firſt who ſhook off the feudal yoke, and though in Naples they have long enjoyed the privilege of municipal juriſdiction, yet the external ſplendour of the nobles, and the authority they ſtill exerciſe over the peaſants, impoſe upon the minds of the lazzaroni; and however bold and reſentful they may be of injuries offered by others, they bear the inſolence of the nobility as paſſively as peaſants fixed to the ſoil. A coxcomb of a volanti tricked out in his fantaſtical dreſs, or any of the liveried ſlaves of the great, make no

ceremony of treating theſe poor fellows with all the inſolence and inſenſibility natural to their maſters; and for no viſible reaſon, but becauſe he is dreſſed in lace, and the others in rags. Inſtead of calling to them to make way, when the noiſe in the ſtreets prevents the common people from hearing the approach of the carriage, a ſtroke acroſs the ſhoulders with the cane of the running footman, is the uſual warning they receive. Nothing animates this people to inſurrection, but ſome very preſſing and very univerſal cauſe; ſuch as a ſcarcity of bread: every other grievance they bear as if it were their charter. When we conſider thirty thouſand human creatures without beds or habitations, wandering almoſt naked in ſearch of food through the ſtreets of a well built city; when we think of the opportunities they have of being together, of comparing their own deſtitute ſituation with the affluence of others, one cannot help being aſtoniſhed at their patience.

Let the prince be diſtinguiſhed by ſplendour and magnificence; let the great and the rich have their luxuries; but, in the name of humanity, let the poor, who are willing to labour, have food in abundance to ſatisfy the cravings of nature, and raiment to defend them from the inclemencies of the weather!

If their governors, whether from weakneſs or neglect, do not ſupply them with theſe, they

certainly have a right to help themſelves.—Every law of equity and common ſenſe will juſtify them, in revolting againſt ſuch governors, and in ſatisfying their own wants from the ſuperfluities of lazy luxury.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.